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Travel in South Africa.

BY

O. ZACHARIAH

late Publicity Agent for South Africa in London.

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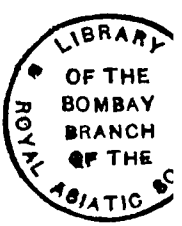

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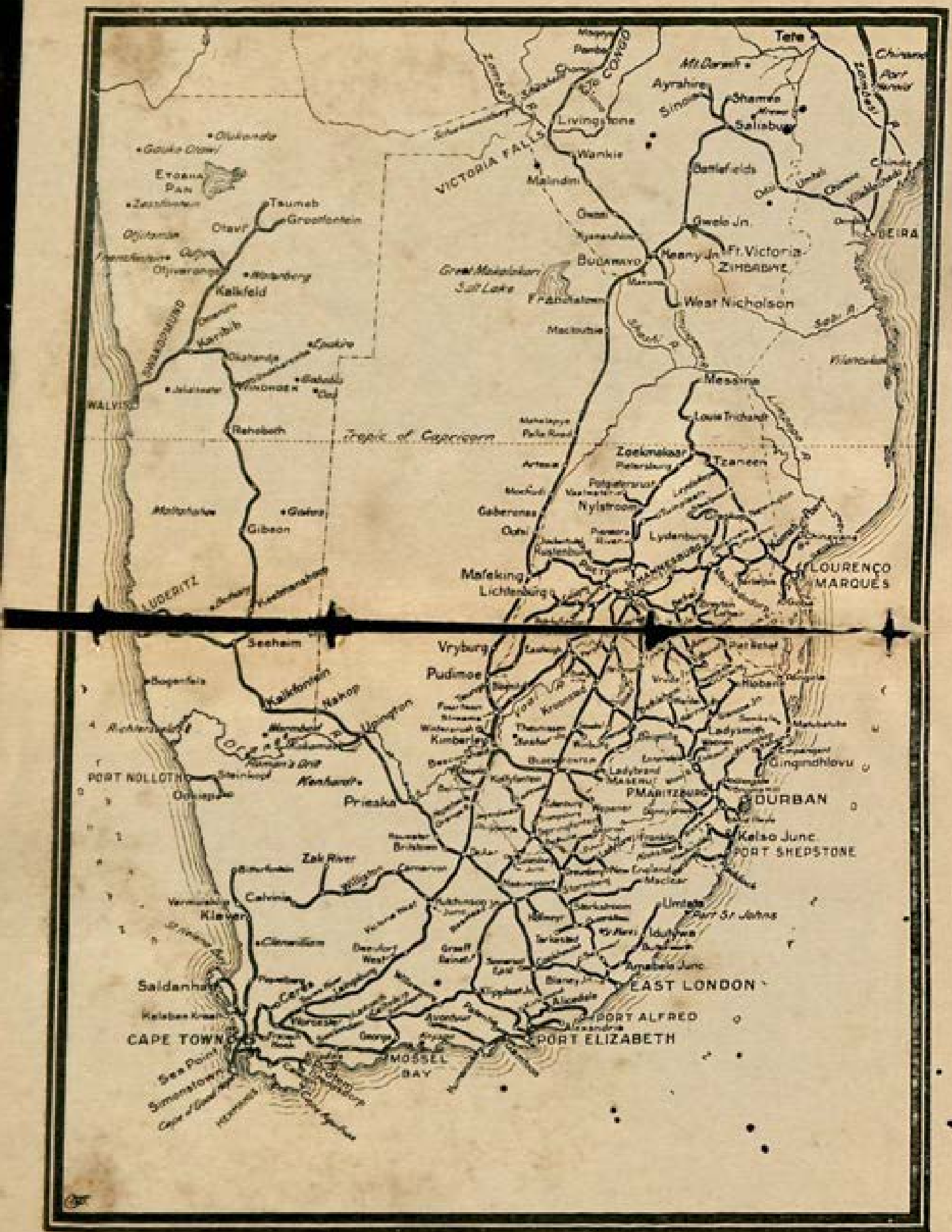


Tete
Chirand
Port Herald
Mt Darwin
Ayrshire
Shamva
Salisbury
Livingstone
Wankie
VICTORIA FALLS
Malindini
Battlefields
Chinde
BEIRA
Gwelo Jn.
Ft. Victoria
ZIMBABWE
Keany Jn.
BUDAWAYO
Great Makalakari Salt Lake
Francistown
West Nicholson
Macloutsie
Messina
Louis Trichardt
Tropic of Capricorn
Zoekmakaar
Tzaneen
Nylstroom
Gaberones
Lydenburg
LOURENÇO MARQUES
Mafeking
Lichtenburg
Vryburg
Pudimoe
Kimberley
Ladysmith
Gingindhlovu
DURBAN
Kelso Junc.
PORT SHEPSTONE
Umtata
Port St Johns
Idutywa
Amabele Junc.
EAST LONDON
PORT ALFRED
PORT ELIZABETH
MOSSEL BAY
CAPE TOWN
Saldanha
Kleven
Calvinia
Zak River
Prieska
Kenhardt
Upington
Kalkfontein
Seeheim
Gibson
Rehoboth
Kalkfeld
Otavi
Tsumeb
Grootfontein
Otjivarongo
Karibib
Okahandja
WINDHOEK
WALVIS
LUDERITZ
Maltahohe
Bogenfels
PORT NOLLOTH
Ookiep
Steinkopf
Kaman's Drift
Richterfeld
Sea Point
Simonstown
Cape of Good Hope
Hermanus
Cape Agulhas
Worcester
Ceres
Clanwilliam
Vermaaklig
Bitterfontein
Kalabas Kraal
Olukonda
Gauko Otawi
Etosha Pan
Zessfontein
Otjitambi
Franzfontein
Otjivarongo
Waterberg
Epokiro
Gobabis
Jakalswater
Kaokoveld
Kaokoveld
Mahalapye
Palla Road
Artesia
Mochudi
Pietersburg
Potgietersrust
Vaalwater
Pienaars River
Rustenburg
Pretoria
Johannesburg
Bloemfontein
Ladybrand
Masenu
P. Maritzburg
Kelso
Maclear
Sterkstroom
Hofmeyr
Tarkastad
Blaney Jn.
Alicedale
Alexandria
Avontuur
Kruger
Kleinbrak
Hutchinson Junc.
Greaff Reinet
Somerset East
Kleinbrak
Cameron
Brittstown
Carnarvon
Williston
Beaufort West
Hermanus
Cape of Good Hope
Cape Agulhas

CHRONOLOGY

1487. Discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomeu Dias.
1497. Landing of Vasco da Gama at St. Helena Bay and at Mossel Bay.
1503. Discovery of Table Bay by Saldanha.
1580. Sir Francis Drake's voyage round the Cape.
1601. First British East India Fleet at Table Bay.
1602. Netherlands East India Company formed.
1652. Landing of Van Riebeeck. First settlement.
1688. Arrival of Huguenot settlers.
1820. Arrival of 4,000 British settlers.
1835. Durban founded.
1836. Great trek from Cape.
1839. Potchefstroom founded.
1842. Natal proclaimed a British possession.
1846. Bloemfontein founded
1848. British sovereignty proclaimed between Orange and Vaal Rivers.
1852. Sand River Convention, recognising independence of Transvaal.
1854. First Cape Parliament.
1855. Pretoria founded.
1857. First Legislative Council in Natal.
1859. First railway in South Africa commenced.
1860. Pretoria established as the seat of government in Transvaal.
1867. First diamond discovered near Hopetown.
1872. Responsible government introduced in the Cape.
1884. Barberton goldfields opened.
1886. Opening of Witwatersrand goldfields. Johannesburg founded.
1888. First mining concession granted by Lobengula. British South Africa Company founded.
1893. Responsible government granted to Natal.
1899. Conference at Bloemfontein between Sir A. Milner and President Kruger. Anglo-Boer War declared (11th October).
1900. Occupation of Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, and Pretoria.
1902. Peace of Vereeniging (31st May). Death of C. J. Rhodes.
1904. Death of ex-President Kruger.
1906. Constitutions given to Transvaal and Orange Free State.
1909. Passing of the South Africa Act by Imperial Parliament. Death of Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr.
1910. Constitution of the Union of South Africa (31st May).
1919. Death of General the Right Hon. Louis Botha.
1925. Prince of Wales visits South Africa.

FOREWORD TO THIRD EDITION.

ALTHOUGH the tour through South Africa recounted in the chapters of this book deals in the main with the feature points of the Sub-Continent, it is as well to remember that this vast land has its byways as well as its highways. And it is as well to know that—however outlandish a suggestion may be conveyed by the utterance of the words "South Africa"—the country is not without its measure of the amenities of a civilised state. The ox-wagon, although symbolical of the country, is no longer the mainstay of South Africa's transport system, and the oft-quoted wide spaces are not wide open to the point of desolation as was the case in the not-far-distant past, when the veld was unfamiliar with the high-powered automobile. The South African Railways Administration —apart from private companies—operates over 6,500 miles of motor services through regions where railways have yet to be laid.

The travel attractions of South Africa are not confined to the purely scenic. The sportsman has come to discover that in South Africa the facilities for the enjoyment of such pastimes as golf, shooting, mountaineering, trout fishing and deep sea angling are every bit as intriguing as those that apply in the Northern Hemisphere; in fact, better, if the year-round clemency of the South African climate is taken into consideration. Health seekers, too, are learning something of the merits of South Africa's Karoo and hot-spring resorts, a number of which combine modern appurtenances with the proven value of the air or waters. Motorists also have found fascination in the mountain roads of South Africa. Thus South Africa is attracting, in ever-increasing numbers, the leisured

traveller where once it attracted only the person content to make a hurried survey of the more spectacular attractions.

Progress is not foreign to the nature of things in South Africa, and notable among the attractions affected by recent development are such as the Kruger National Park in the Eastern Transvaal and the Drakensberg National Park on the Natal-Free State border.

The Kruger Park is a game reserve over nine thousand square miles in extent, where hordes of wild game—antelope of many varieties, buffalo, elephant, rhino, giraffe, lion, etc.—roam the bushveld free and untrammelled, providing a spectacle unrivalled in its particular sphere. Although without proper accommodation, it is nevertheless possible with the aid of a camping outfit to extract from a sojourn in this Park much edification, and possibly a thrill or two. The best time to visit the Kruger Park is in the winter months when the climate is ideal and the leafless trees afford open view. The railway line from Komatipoort northward to Messina traverses the Park, and even from the train—so plentiful is the wild life—the traveller may glimpse some of the more emboldened of the fauna.

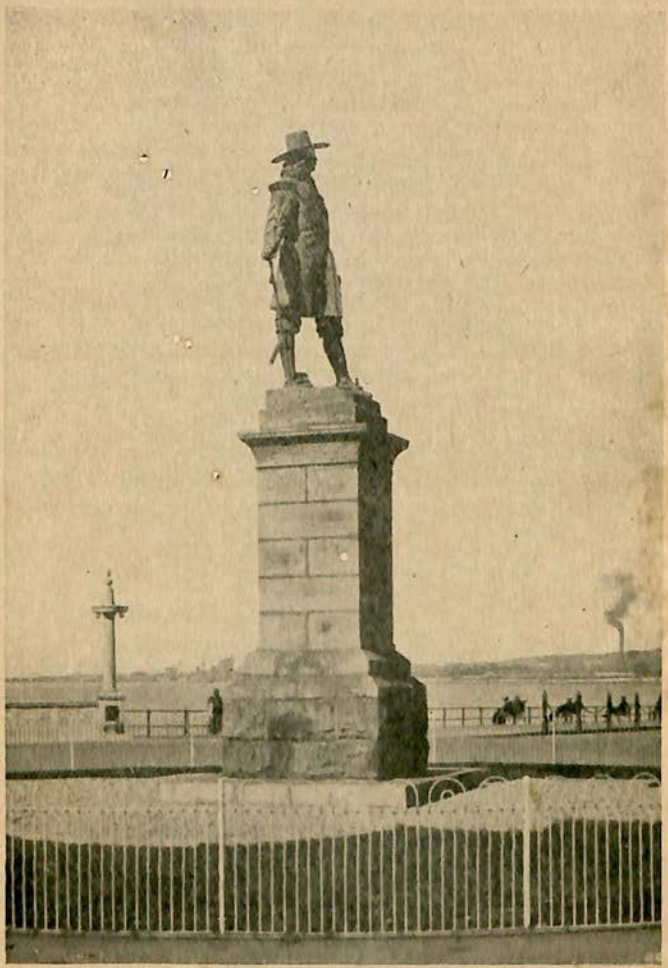
The Drakensberg National Park has to-day its regular avenues of communication, and is the recognised rendezvous of South African mountaineers.

Apart from creations having a direct bearing on the traveller's interest, there have occurred in recent times events that, without conscious effort on the part of anybody, have added picturesque facets to the already variegated appeal of South Africa. The discovery in the Western Transvaal of rich beds of alluvial diamonds comes within this category, for it has been the means of establishing in the heart of the veld a community whose very business is colourful in the extreme. As Bret Harte saw the goldfields in California, so is it possible to see in South Africa to-day all the elements of the mining camp as it has adorned the pages of popular works of fiction.

The Victoria Falls, naturally enough, remains the stellar attraction of a South African tour. This scenic jewel continues "in puris naturalibus"—unsullied by buildings, cables, railings, platforms or other works of man that might tend to discount the glories of such a masterpiece of Nature. It is, however, one thing to gratify the visual tastes of the visitor, and another to meet his material requirements. Happily enough, South Africa has reached that stage in its history where its resorts can be enjoyed in association with material comfort, comparable in many instances with existent conditions at the resorts of the Northern Hemisphere.

Hotel accommodation is one direction in which improvement has been effected in South Africa, and in the larger centres the stranger need have no misgivings on this score. Railway facilities, likewise, reveal a condition of progressiveness, it being possible now to make long-distance journeys on trains which compare for speed with the overland expresses of Europe and America, whilst for comfort South African trains are no whit behind those elsewhere.

To sum up, South Africa has modernised the approaches to its scenic attractions.



STATUE OF JOHAN VAN RIEBEECK, CAPETOWN.

PROLOGUE

South Africa is one of the most attractive countries in the world. Its charm would be hard to analyse but undoubtedly it exists. This cannot be set down entirely to climate, beautiful though that is, or to the wide expanse of the rolling veld, or to the grandeur of its mountains, or to the charm of its woodland scenery. The real cause lies deeper, and results in the fact that to those who have made South Africa their home, and even to those who have made only a temporary sojourn there, it will always remain the one country to which they desire to return.

—DOMINIONS ROYAL COMMISSION.

PROPERLY to appreciate South Africa—what it stands for and may develop into—one should know something of Africa as a whole, the continent usually known as "dark," but where nevertheless civilisation had its infancy, and where it may yet have a high manifestation.

Africa was the last continent to be explored, but the first to figure in history. Nine-tenths of it has no authentic record, and until modern times was little affected by civilising influences. But the tenth part, the northern fringe of the continent—what other portion of the world has had so varied and so wonderful a past! This was the Africa of Hannibal, all-conquering in its day; the monumental Africa of the Pharaohs, socially and architecturally spectacular beyond anything before or since; the Africa of the Ptolemies, boasting a rule almost modern in its enlightenment; the literary brilliant Africa Augustine knew; the Africa of Antony and Cleopatra, steeped in romance.

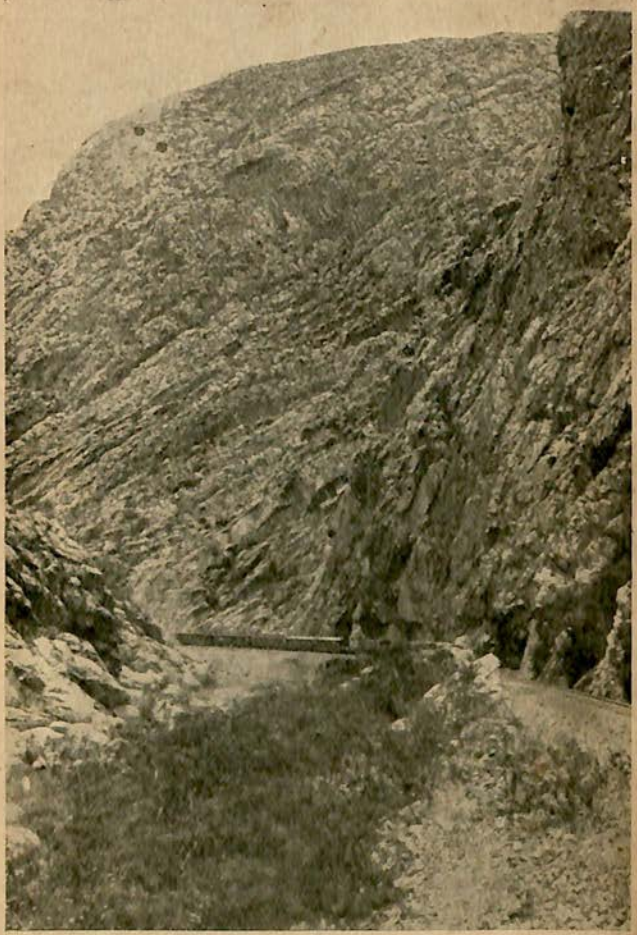
TABLE MOUNTAIN—A LANDMARK OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS.

But even in that northern area, the ancient grandeur is gone. Solitude and decay have taken its place. So completely is this so, that, travelling in Egypt or Algeria to-day, it is with something of shock one realises, not only how far Northern Africa has fallen from its old estate, but how little there is even to remind one of the great past.

The very languages in which its history is recorded, the illustrious civilisations of old, are dead. Carthage, "to which three hundred cities paid homage," has been wiped from the face of the earth. Thebes, the hundred-gated, is fallen. Alexandria, that seat of ancient learning and luxury, how different its world-status to-day! And the Africans of old—orators, legislators, soldiers—who, Othello-like, gave lustre to the society of even Greece and Rome, have gone to their rest and left no successors.

In the march of civilisation Africa somehow lost step, and from the van fell to the rear, and there lagged farther and farther behind. So that though known through the ages, Africa is to-day really less known than those modern discoveries, North America and Australia; it has on the whole proved less amenable to progressive civilisation, and has been less changed by foreign influence.

Even in Asia, successive tides of invasion have left their mark on the manners, habits, laws, beliefs, features, and complexions of the people. In Africa, invasion, whether Phœnician or Greek, Roman or Persian, established regimes splendid in their day; but they did not last, they did not



TOVERWATERPOORT: A GIGANTIC PASS NEAR OUDTSHOORN.

even leave a lasting impression. The ancient colonists were failures. Instead of setting their stamp on Africa, slowly but surely Africa set its stamp upon them. They were absorbed. Behind the veil that shrouds so much of Africa in mystery, each in turn disappeared. The Dark Continent took them to her pagan bosom, their identity was lost in that of the stronger African blood. They have left no clearly recognisable descendants, their works lie buried in ruin, and Africa is again a continent with problems and possibilities still almost virgin.

Therefore, though in size the second, and in possibilities perhaps the largest of the continents, Africa has, on the whole, contributed much towards the edification, but little to the support of mankind. Though fruitful, with large areas under the best of climates, it has on the whole proved impervious to colonisation.

Will this always be so in a world gradually becoming crowded?

The problem is as interesting as it was in the days of Egypt's glory, but the scene of the interest has shifted. It is not the north, but the south, that plays the leading role in Africa to-day. In ancient times all foreign influences, all attempts to colonise, entered Africa from the north. Modern colonisation reversed the process and started from the south. And of this colonisation, of European settlement on a permanent and progressive scale, the best because the most extensive

A SCHOOL OF HIPPOS IN A NORTHERN TRANSVAAL RIVER.

and oldest example in Africa to-day is found in the southernmost extremity of the continent, in what is now the Union of South Africa.

There, through nearly three centuries, European traditions and institutions have been acclimatised, and now flourish and permeate the surrounding country.

Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the Union of South Africa to-day carries the burden which Egypt, Greece, and Rome let fall; for the Union is trying to solve the problem of the African races' proper place in the scheme of things. It is a more important problem than is generally realised. If satisfactorily solved, not only will the native of the south benefit directly, but the solution of the south may leaven, and in time transform, the conditions of life throughout the whole of Africa. It may bring into line with the rest of the progressive world that mighty continent which has lain so long in darkness and in lethargy.

The Union of South Africa is less than one-twentieth the size of the continent of which it forms part, and by no means the most densely populated portion of that continent; but with its equipment for studying and perhaps solving the problems of Africa, the Union is most important and interesting. Climatically it is much like Australia. Socially it resembles the older communities of the United States, having the same foundation of Dutch, British, and Huguenot blood. Yet in essentials it differs from both in that, besides its long-established European population, it has a

ON A SOUTH AFRICAN ALLUVIAL DIAMOND FIELD.

large and growing black population, with a sprinkling of Asiatics, mostly Indians, each race preserving its own characteristics yet living in amity and steady progress.

In history this is almost unique. Generally either the colonist or the native has succumbed. In America it was the native; in ancient Africa, the colonist. In Asia Europeans have never established themselves, except as a ruling caste. But in South Africa the native flourishes and increases under European colonisation, which gives South Africa a political significance and international interest greater even than that of larger Dominions.

South Africa is thus often in the public eye, yet, paradoxical as it may seem, is on the whole little known. Everybody has heard of its mineral wealth, but comparatively few outside the Union have any conception of its other claims to attention. Eulogies, suggesting that were its pleasant places better known they would be thronged, have been bestowed unstintingly, even by those acquainted with the best elsewhere. But the eulogies were generally oral, did not carry far enough to make the attractions of South Africa as widely known as those of, say, Italy or Japan; and the world-wide prominence given to the country had reference to its gold and diamonds rather than to the country itself—its scenery, climate, and romantic past.

South Africa, even by those wedded to her interests, somehow was pictured abroad more as

POLANA BEACH, LOURENCO MARQUES.

an heiress than as a bride; in the contemplation of her riches her beauty was lost to sight.

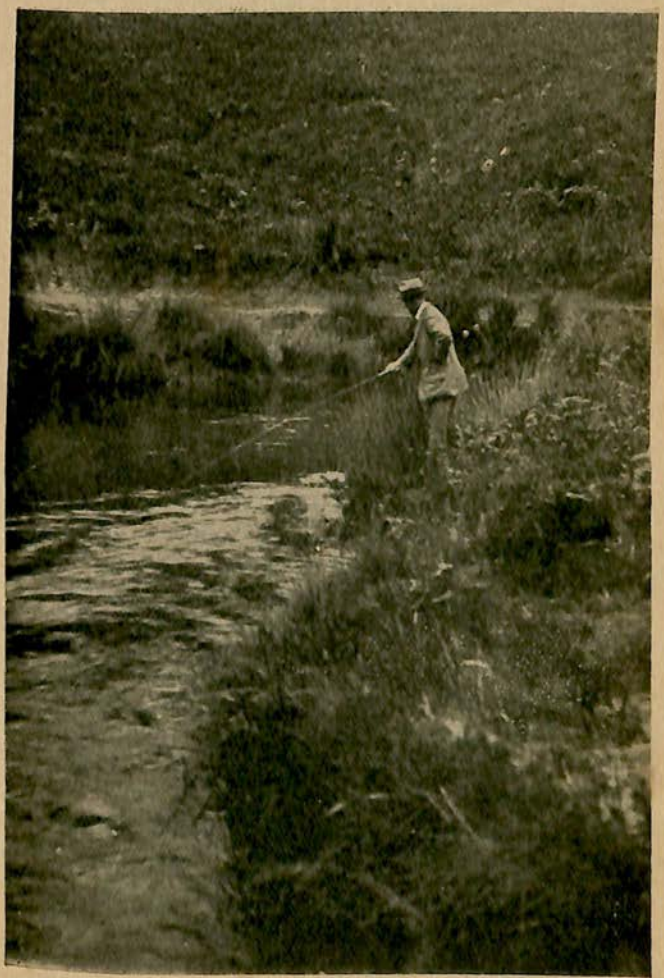
Twenty or thirty years ago, when the railway, shipping, and hotel facilities of South Africa were not nearly as good as now, the country was too remote, entailed too much discomfort and expense on travellers to be popular as a resort; and the attractions of Europe and the then novel East were still too absorbing for travellers to seek new fields. It is different to-day. The remotest part of South Africa can be reached and enjoyed with ease and comfort; and not only have the travelling facilities been modernised, but the attractions to which they lead are fresh and uncommon.

The convenience and charm of European and North African travel resorts are such as will probably continue unrivalled. Their popularity is deserved; but the edge of their novelty wears off. More and more the season in Rome, Cairo, or along the Riviera resembles that of London, Paris, or New York. Brilliant throngs, set-scenes, functions—all the innovations that money and fashion can contrive to make life super-luxurious, are there. All are good. They make travel doubly enjoyable. South Africa has nothing like it to offer. But a thorough change is also good. It is well occasionally to get beneath not only sunny but new skies, to wander amid fresh scenes and unfamiliar people, to shift the atmosphere and tenor of one's life to parts altogether strange. It is well occasionally to enlarge ideas, widen sympathies, and vary experience by going far abroad.

Change and innovation are, however, everywhere, and who shall say how soon there may be no going abroad in the true sense? The development of the distant parts of the globe, improved and rapid communication, closer intercourse between the nations, European spheres of influence in Asia and Africa, no doubt tend to material advantage; but increasingly they create uniformity.

So that in time, one may suppose, there will be little variety for the traveller, few national differences except in speech, complexion, and climate. Even South Africa is becoming conventional. The etiquette and fashion-plate of the boulevard creep gradually to the kraal and already the buxom Kafir wench of the town knows something of ball gowns; and the native dandy, whose ancestors were content with the skins of the animals they slew, or the cloth of the bark they wove, now enters domestic service that he, too, may promenade in lavender gloves and patent-leather boots.

South Africa should therefore be seen before in the general transition its distinctiveness also is lost. As a field of travel it has much to offer the traveller that is out of the common. It is by no means devoid of historic interest. Its coast has associations which, if they lack European antiquity and Asiatic pageantry, still stir memories not only of national, but of world events. South Africa, as we have seen, is only a small part of the continent, yet so situated as to reflect in miniature the whole.



A TROUT STREAM IN THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL.

It has great variety of scenery and interest—nearly every species of foliage from the pine to the palm, a climate varying from the temperate to the tropical, and every type of mankind from the Orient to the Occident.

In the Cape Peninsula are exquisite scenes, woodland, mountain, and marine. In the Drakensberg we find not exactly Alpine effects, but a grandeur in its way as impressive. And in Natal and parts of the Transvaal there is the vivid beauty of the sub-tropics.

These are the main attractions, but the by-ways also call. Around Pietermaritzburg and Bloemfontein, as around Port Elizabeth and East London; on the upper altitude of the Transvaal and Free State, as in the bushveld or in the forests of Knysna; even on the arid Karoo—genial skies, clean breadth of existence, almost daily sunshine, and many interesting people, conduce to a serene enjoyment of this field of travel.

The splendour of the Victoria Falls, the mystery of the Zimbabwe Ruins, the lingering Calvinism of the pioneers (which still invests places like Pretoria), and the peculiar interest of Johannesburg (that golden metropolis), combine by their piquancy to keep the interest from flagging.

Such is the variety of scene, and such, above all, the delightfulness of the climate, that the least pliant minds may be calculated to yield to the lure of South Africa.

CHAPTER I.

CAPETOWN—THE MOTHER CITY.

English people afflicted at home by a winter climate which year after year grows more intolerable, fruitlessly and at great cost seek sunshine and warmth in the south of Europe amid unsympathetic foreigners.

A three-weeks' voyage [now seventeen days] unaccompanied by hardship or risk would bring them to this lovely spot, the Cape of Good Hope, where among people of their own race, speaking their own language, and thinking their own thoughts, they would find and enjoy the most temperate and equable summer weather, with all the attractions of seaside existence which the earth can offer.

—LORD RANDOLPH CHURCHILL.

THE sea-voyage to South Africa is the fair-weather voyage of the world. It alone repays the traveller for coming so far abroad. And if he knows what he is coming to, there is the exhilaration when, sixteen days out of Southampton, Table Mountain looms on the horizon to stir him with anticipation of that noble country which lies around and behind the mountain.

When the "Grand Trade" went round the Cape of Good Hope, before the Suez and Panama Canals were constructed, Table Mountain was the principal signpost on the world's greatest highway. At its foot in Table Bay, the voyagers, after three months at sea, foregathered with relish. Whatever their nationality, or the extent of their travels, few writing from the Cape in those days omitted to record their admiration for the beauty

of the flora, the charm of the mountain setting, the climate, and the attractiveness of life there.

Capetown was then the world's half-way house —a remote outpost of civilisation and hospitality. To-day it is one of the world's fairest cities.

As the steamer approaches Table Bay, and the mountains, which rise sheer from the sea, are seen in more detail, the scene is one to hold the attention. Foremost is Table Mountain, its summit sometimes further beautified by the familiar cloth of cloud. Surrounding ranges extend as far as the eye can see. And at the base of Table Mountain is Capetown.

In profile, Capetown is not unlike Naples. And from Sea Point to Hout Bay, then across the isthmus to Sir Lowry Pass and Gordon's Bay, is a classic and almost Ionic environment, of mountain-girt bays, and fertile mountain-girt valleys, with pine and oak trees in forests, picturesque views between the mountains and the sea, old and romantic-looking mansions in the woods, and vineyards on the foot-hills.

The city is the stateliest in South Africa. The surrounding Peninsula is uncommonly beautiful. On landing one's first impression is of the familiar. The principal thoroughfares, Adderley and St. George's Streets, present on a modified scale life as it is in the pleasanter towns of Britain. There are the same well-dressed crowds and suggestions of general culture. The shops are good, hotels, theatres and restaurants plentiful, and the buildings on the whole handsome.

ONE OF CAPETOWN'S OLD AVENUES.

But there the resemblance to a British town of quality ends. The place is as much Dutch as British. Everybody speaks English, but Dutch is freely used in the home and parliament, in the church, law courts, and a section of the Press. French is no longer current, and the descendants of the Huguenots approximate nearer to the Dutch than to the British.

At the Cape, as this part of South Africa is colloquially called, there are thus two predominant European types. Each exerts a notable influence on the country, but outwardly at least both types are so alike, that whatever their essential differences, they are not obvious to the newcomer.

A racial peculiarity that does, however, at once impress itself, is that of a population of about two hundred and fifty thousand, nearly half is of Malay or Bantu descent. This colour element, together with the sunny and vivacious atmosphere, the mountain setting, and a foliage of southern richness, combines to give Capetown an air that is foreign but cordial. The bay in front of Capetown, on a cloudless day, lies blue as a Pacific lagoon. In the background, so close that its shadows creep into the city, is the mountain. And for twenty miles along the foot-hills are the suburbs.

It is a land of flowers. "In an area smaller than the Isle of Wight," the guide-book tells us, "there are two hundred more species of flowers than in the whole of England." Certainly the

variety and the vivid beauty of the orchids and heaths that grow wild at the Cape at once attract.

The Cape is noted for its drives. The principal of these is along the circular mountain road, skirting the sea, from Capetown to the Cape of Good Hope, a distance of a hundred miles for the round trip, in the course of which one travels along the edge of the Atlantic, and then along the edge of the Indian Ocean, in surroundings varied and impressive. Indeed, many travellers acquainted with the world's show places, have concurred in terming this the finest of marine drives. Sea Point, Clifton, Camp's Bay, Hout Bay, then Constantia, Kirstenbosch and Groote Schuur, in turn delight the eye, with Muizenberg and False Bay faintly visible on one side of the Peninsula and Table Bay on the other.

There are several botanic gardens in South Africa. That at Kirstenbosch, half-way across the Peninsula, is the national one, and is attracting botanists from all parts of the world for research work.

Muizenberg, sixteen miles by railway from Capetown, has a perfect beach. The surf-bathing there is one of the holiday delights of South Africa. The temperature of the water is mild, even in winter, being seventeen degrees higher than in Table Bay. The beach, of clean firm sand, extends unbroken for miles round False Bay, and slopes gently into the inviting breakers.

Such, briefly, were the surroundings we entered when we stepped from the steamer at the foot of

Table Mountain. Capetown won our hearts at once. There was a Californian floweriness and brightness peculiarly gratifying to those newly disembarked from a long sea voyage. The café balconies were gay with life. The kerbs were gardenlike with blossoms, where the coloured flower-sellers displayed their wares. A pleasant wind brought coolness to the city, there was a hint of pine in the vigorous air, and the sunshine on pavement and wall lay in warm rich patches.

Capetown is a bewitching city, yet such is the even greater attraction of the suburbs that the bulk of the people live out of town. The result is a heavy suburban traffic. In the early morning, at lunch-time, and towards the end of the business day, as again at night, when theatre-goers and diners-out are afoot, there is the animation so well known in big European cities—thousands pouring from or into trains and trams.

Then suddenly comes a lull. Capetown has a breathing space; for a while it is almost empty. At such a time there is an old-world dignity and repose about the place. This is especially felt in the old East India Company's garden at the top of Adderley Street. The ancient oaks have a venerable aspect; and an air of monastic calm lingers round the adjacent Houses of Parliament, colleges, and cathedral.

But perhaps the most alluring part of Capetown is Orangezicht and the area known as the Gardens, the foliaged residential quarters on the slope of the mountain, overlooking the bay. There

THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, CAPETOWN.

we sat through the waning southern day, till the valley below lay in shadow. In front, the quick heart of the city was visible, but city sounds were muted. A fishing fleet rocked at the foot of Adderley Street—a great grey liner crept out to sea. Across the bay, the Hottentots Holland Mountains lay blue with distance, and fainter behind them, more and more mountains.

It is a fruitful country behind those far distant mountains. There, in the hill-fed streams, trout may be got, and fair shooting—antelopes, hares, and partridges in the foot-hills, duck and snipe on the vleis.

There most of the wine and brandy of South Africa is made, in fertile valleys amongst the sun-burnt mountains. Table grapes, peaches, apricots, melons, plums, and figs are grown by the train-load, and almonds, walnuts, and pears in quantities only slightly less.

Farther north, on the Bokkeveld, where at night sometimes there may be a pinch of frost, are the wheatlands and apple orchards. Beyond is the sheep country of the Karoo, with the diamond mines on its edge; and farther on, the altitude increasing still, the maize fields and cattle farms of the high veld, as high as six thousand feet above sea-level, with the Transvaal gold and coal mines in their midst.

In inverse order there is much the same series of production on the other side of the country as one descends from the high altitudes of the Free State and Southern Transvaal to the sub-

tropical Eastern Transvaal and coastal belt of Natal.

As evening fell we drove from Capetown ten miles to historic Constantia. It was pleasant to speed in the perfumed dusk, through avenues of great trees, past sleepy gardens and vineyards. The electric-illumined foliage, the dark mountains looming alongside, and a crescent moon above the fir-belt, made a scene to remember. There was a dance at Government House, and it happened also to be a gala night. Representatives of the Naval Station at Simonstown were much in evidence. Gay motors flashed over the well-kept roads, women in exquisite toilets graced a scene that few could contemplate without feeling how pleasant life at the Cape would be.

It was a memorable introduction to the Cape suburbs. But we found them even more delightful by daylight. Groote Schuur especially, once the home of Cecil Rhodes, now the official residence of the Prime Minister of the Union, was a place of which we never wearied. It is a large estate, situated on the lower slopes of the mountain, in noble surroundings. It stirred in us feelings many and varied.

"Sitting among the ruins of the Capitol at Rome, musing on the past, while the white-robed friars chanted vespers in the Temple of Jupiter," Gibbon tells us, the idea came to him of picturing for posterity that tremendous procession of men and events which he subsequently bodied forth in the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

Excepting associations, there was in his surroundings little to stir the feelings; but such were the associations that perhaps the noblest pageant on record arose and was permanently revived.

Something of the same haunting spell is felt at the Doric temple on the mountain slopes above Groote Schuur. Rhodes felt it. It drew him irresistibly, and the spot became his favourite nook, where he mused and planned and drew much of his inspiration.

Viewed from that point, the Cape Peninsula lies spread like a map, the Indian Ocean on one side, the Atlantic on the other—a woodland idyll of cool majestic colouring, in which the most stately and historic homes of South Africa are found.

They are on a generous scale, those white-walled, sun-splashed residences; and famed for a hospitality that goes back some centuries. Among them the blood is quickened, and a pulse of lost feeling beats again. We found it an entrancing place, especially towards sunset, in which to dream away an hour. So we lingered on, and the wells of fancy filled. Steeped, as we had become, in the natural beauty and historic spirit of the place, the imagination swung from the present to the past. In fancy the heroic and then the courtly age revived, for the Cape was most intimately associated with those ages, and from them has derived something that still lingers in its people. And warrior countenances, and gentle faces in powder and patch, living again, peered from the abyss of time.

Wistfully at first, then boldly, they trooped across their one-time stage.

And across the Peninsula, where Table Bay was visible as a bow of blue waters, phantom galleons for the nonce sailed for us, and dons and senhors, pursuing still that mythical El Dorado that all men sought and no man found, stepped as it were from oblivion. We pictured them as once they had come to the lonely shadow-world beneath the great scarped rock. And in fancy we heard the sound of tackle running free, and the creak of mighty booms, as though with sails bending to the breeze, the Spanish conquistador, and the ship of romance, entered that bay again. The historic associations of the Cape, unexpected to the newcomer, formed one of the main attractions for us. Indeed, so broodingly does history linger round the Cape, that while the lens of the eye is busy photographing the natural beauties, the shuttle of the mind is busier weaving romance. To and fro between the ages it goes, shooting the woof of fancy through the warp of what fact we have, till, on the loom of the brain, a kind of mental tapestry is formed, in which the trees, mountains, and bays of the Cape are but the background to the even more picturesque lives of the old navigators and colonials. With them passed away a romantic fragrance and colour. Their going left the Cape the poorer. But the gardens, the spacious homes, the leafy walks, and the genial life of the place remain.

NEWLANDS AVENUE, CAPETOWN.

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORIC CAPE.

The history of South Africa is one of the true and great romances of modern times.

—GENERAL SMUTS.

"NOWHERE is there a city more delightfully situated than Capetown." So says Froude. The tribute is just. And besides being beautiful, the Cape is historical. There the Indian Ocean meets the Atlantic. There, in 1487, Dias saw the sea-route to India. This incited Columbus, who in his search for India found America instead. It also incited da Gama, the first European to reach India by sea.

Few discoveries have more influenced the affairs of nations. They form an outstanding decade, those discoveries between 1487 and 1497. Any account of South Africa, what it has stood for and has become, should therefore give at least a passing glance to the personages and events of the great era from which Cape history dates.

There have been eras of greater military and religious leadership; of greater culture, literary, artistic, and social; but the era which inaugurated world-wide navigation was the most beneficial.

It was the true dawn after the Dark Ages; and it was at the Cape that the first rays of that dawn lit, when Dias saw the way round.

About the Cape there is thus that dignity and moving suggestiveness which age and tradition

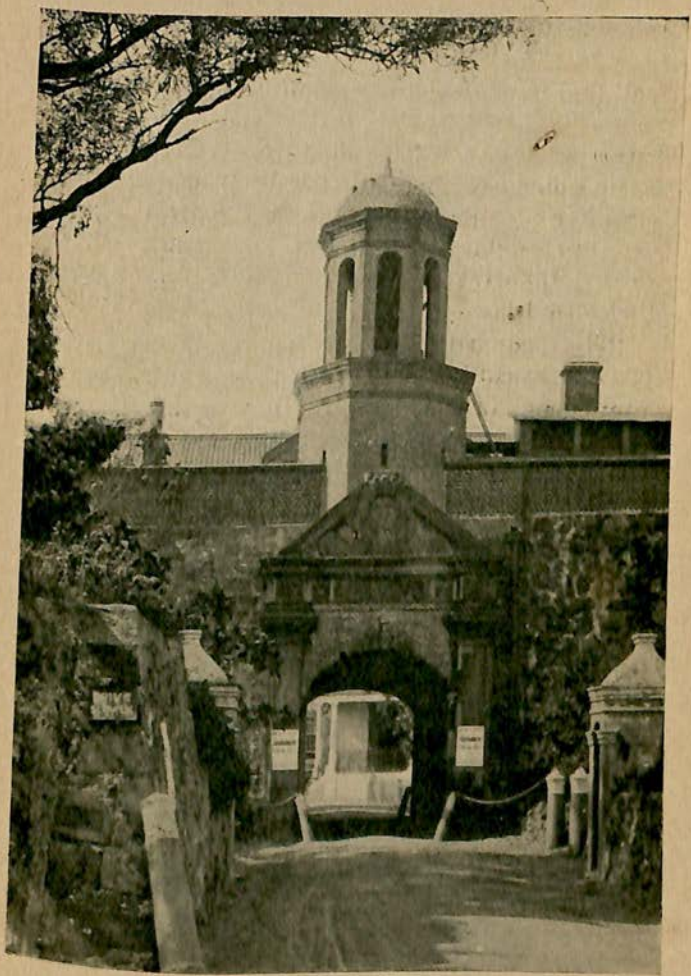
give. Over those pleasant scenes an air of antiquity lingers, that recalls with peculiar charm those stirring days when the Portuguese and Spanish sailed heavy with the spoils of Mexico and Peru; when the Dutch and English grew rich on the treasure of Asia; and when most of the great voyagers either called at or sighted the Cape, which Drake described as "the fairest cape in the whole circumference of the world."

Commerce was adventurous, maritime conduct intrepid, in those far-off days. The Cape became a half-way house for much of this. If not exactly the Venice of the new order of things, it became the pivot around which, as previously around Venice, the Grand Trade between East and West revolved.

Until the close of the fifteenth century, the products Europe drew from Asia were carried to the ports of the Mediterranean, from where they were distributed through Europe, mainly by the merchants of Venice.

This rich trade was a monopoly—first in the hands of the Asiatics, who levied what toll they liked; then in the hands of the Venetians, who took those fat profits which made the little republic on the lagoons so considerable a world-power.

Fortunes were awaiting whoever could trade direct with the centres of production in Asia. Hence the many expeditions along the west coast of Africa to find a waterway. Little was known about that continent, which centuries later was



THE CASTLE (1666) AT CAPETOWN.

still termed "dark"; but clearly if it terminated this side the Pole, one could get to India and China by sea.

So, hardly realising the magnitude of the enterprise, the mariners of that age, the greatest discoverers in history, sought the "land's end." Their equipment was pathetically inadequate; obstacles were appalling, failures plentiful. Yet expedition followed expedition, each going a little farther than the previous one. Then came Bartholomeu Dias.

He set out with two small ships. Week after week he sailed into the great unknown, where no white man had gone before. In time supplies ran short. Disease and discouragement increased among the crew, and still the tiny vessels pitched on their lonely course, sometimes through tempests of unprecedented violence.

At last a point on the South African coast, a little beyond what is now Port Elizabeth, was reached. The adventurers had rounded the Cape. The road to India lay open before them. But Dias, though he had some inkling of the truth, failed to persuade his stricken crew to go farther.

He had discovered twelve hundred and sixty miles of hitherto unknown coast. Valuable experience had been gained, and five years later Columbus, also seeking a sea-route to India, thrilled the nations by unexpectedly finding America instead.

There was apparently more beyond the horizon than Europe had even dreamt of. A fever for

discovery ensued. In 1497, Vasco da Gama started on that epoch-making voyage which set in motion influences that radically changed the relations between the nations of the world.

His equipment was superior to that with which Dias had sailed, and the heavier misfortunes which had attended the latter held aloof from da Gama, who not only rounded the Cape, but continued to a point near the mouth of the Zambesi River. There anchor was dropped at last, " where eastern palms hung over the flat-roofed houses, and a Moorish fleet rocked on the sun-kissed waves."

Thus West met East in eastern waters. Even at that date the eastern sea-board of Africa had for centuries been under the influence of civilised nations. For centuries it had been exploited in turn by Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Greeks, followed later by Arabs, Persians, and Indians. And when da Gama arrived, a considerable Oriental community was established there.

For da Gama's party, however, the main object was India. They stayed on the eastern coast of Africa only until a pilot was secured, who showed the way to Calicut, where da Gama arrived ten months after commencing his voyage. Sixteen months later he was back in Portugal.

He was then in a position to confirm the reports of Asia's riches. A fleet was soon dispatched by Portugal to benefit from his discoveries, and in time other countries also sent fleets.

Results were rapid. Ceylon was occupied. Trading posts were established along the Indian

THE RHODES MEMORIAL, CAPETOWN.

and African sea-boards. A Portuguese viceroy was appointed. Spain conquered Mexico, and a few years later Peru. The first French settlers in Canada landed in 1539. Japan was discovered to Europe in 1542. By 1565 the first town in what is now the United States of America was founded. And in 1577 Drake commenced the first voyage round the world.

On the Cape the effect was that the Grand Trade between East and West passed via Table Mountain instead of, as previously via St. Marks.

Thus was started a struggle more widely spread than the campaigns of Alexander, richer in booty than the Napoleonic wars, and in ultimate beneficence, to Europe at least, great beyond computation.

It was the beginning, in eastern waters, of that great semi-religious, semi-commercial struggle which shaped for centuries the fortunes not only of Africa, America, and much of Asia, but radically changed conditions in Europe itself—a struggle which gave to Christendom the ascendancy over Mohammedanism, and by elevating to leading international rank, in turn, Portugal, Spain, Holland, and Britain, determined the fluctuating balance of European power.

History must be searched closely before so striking an example is found of beginnings so small leading to ends so great. Nations surrendered to a few ship-loads of Europeans. Continents were dominated with less sacrifice of life and treasure by the conquerors than had been

spent on many a campaign between European principalities.

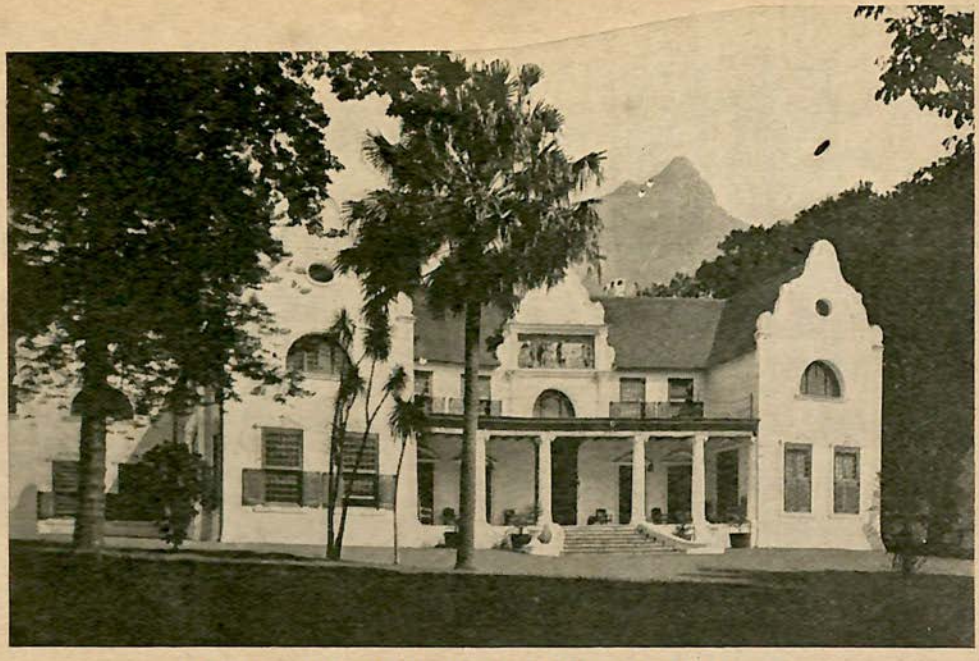
Change, glamour, and bustle spread quickly East and West, to and from the new seas and lands opened by the discoveries of da Gama and Columbus. In this change a part was played by the Cape. It was the point at which the adventurers swung from the old to the new; a refuge from storm and scurvy, where mariners obtained cattle and sheep from the Hottentots, sweet water from the mountain torrent, strength and encouragement from the healing surroundings.

The Portuguese and Spanish did not make the use of the Cape which the Dutch and English subsequently did. But all nations called there. Indeed, the first Portuguese viceroy in India, on his return journey, died at the Cape. The King of Spain was anxious to turn the place to permanent use. Had he carried out that intention, the history and destiny of South Africa might have been the same as much of Spanish America.

It was not, however, until naval supremacy passed from the Portuguese to the Spanish, and then in turn from the Spanish to the Dutch, that a permanent settlement was made at Capetown. The traffic with the East had exceeded all expectations, great though they were. The India Companies of Holland and England grew powerful and employed administrators, commanders, and retinues of minor civil and military officials, who voyaged to and fro in the ponderous East Indiamen. Anything up to six months was then

a fast trip to India. And as the art of preserving food and of catering aboard ship was still much what it had been in the sixteenth century, the need for improving the refreshment facilities in Table Bay was urgent.

Had they known it, they were rounding a land that was richer in diamonds and gold than those more distant lands to which they voyaged so feverishly. But this they did not know. They saw only the advantages of growing cabbages at the Cape. So in 1652 Commander Van Riebeeck came, and a party of about a hundred came with him to farm.



GROOTE SCHUUR: A HISTORICAL HOMESTEAD OF THE CAPE.

CHAPTER III.

IN OLD CAPETOWN.

Capetown holds a high, and in some senses almost unique, place among the cities of the Empire.

—LORD MILNER.

VAN RIEBEECK came to a noble environment. Mountain-ranges towered before him, forest trees darkened the ravines, and a tempting valley invited attention.

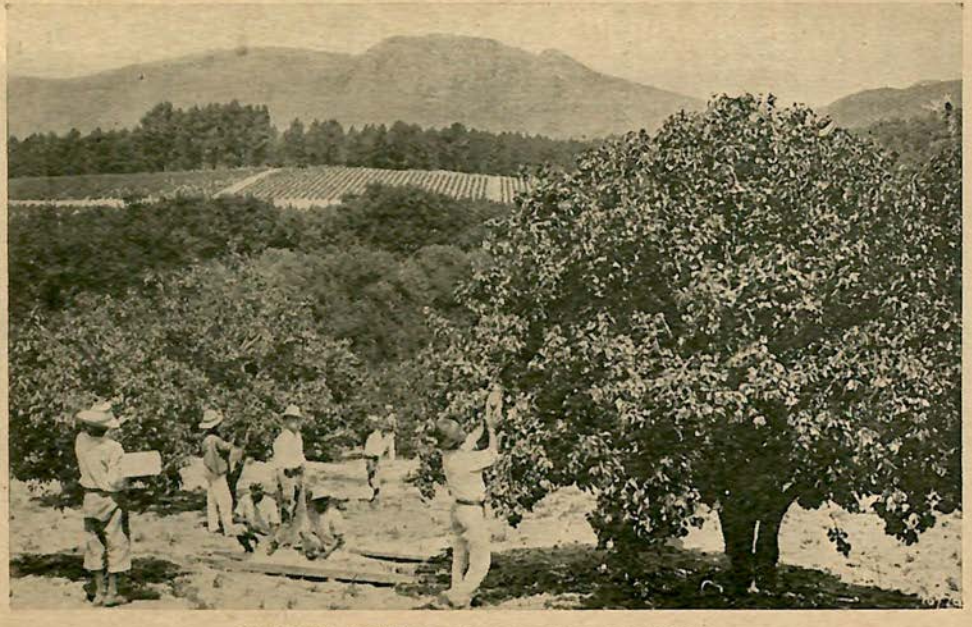
Over all was the comforting sunshine and the wistful colouring of a typical autumn day in the Cape Peninsula.

Seen from the sea, the prospect cheered the settlers. On landing, however, impressions changed. The valley, after the long dry summer, proved to be parched, wind-swept, and unyielding. And when the rains of winter came, they were torrential, inundating everything.

The lot of the new-comers was therefore a hard one. But they lost no time in wrestling with Nature.

In the virgin forests of the mountain slopes the woodcutters plied their trade. Daily the song of the axe was heard in the lonely ravines. Great trees were dragged to the camp, where the colonists hammered and hewed. Limekilns were built, brickfields worked, and soon there grew the little pioneer village from which Capetown sprang.

And as they warmed to their work, interest bit in and life grew congenial. Fields and livestock



A FRUIT ORCHARD IN THE CAPE PENINSULA.

throve after a while, vines began to yield, and instead of the frugal fare with which the settlers started, there was in time a local plenty.

On the surrounding seas the days of romantic voyaging were almost over. Portugal had succumbed to the dominance of Spain. Spain had, by England, been reduced as a naval power, and by Holland had been almost ousted from the trade with the East.

More vessels sailed round the Cape than before, but the trade, being so largely in the hands of the practical Dutch, had been regulated, and wore more the aspect of routine than of adventure.

In 1679 Van der Stel replaced Van Riebeeck. Nine years later the Huguenot immigrants arrived. Instead of being merely a refreshment depot for the fleets, the Cape became a colony. English, French, Danish, Spanish, and Portuguese ships increasingly called there. Many of them, unlike the rigorously controlled Dutch ships, had latitude in trading.

They made a world-mart of Capetown. Almost anything produced in Europe or the East was obtainable there.

It was the turn in the tide of fortune. Ships of every flag creaked outside Capetown.

From the founders of empires, such as Clive and Hastings, to the rawest victims of the press-gangs, every degree of power and poverty, on its way between West and East, passed through Capetown.

HERMANUS: A NOTED SEA-ANGLING RESORT OF THE CAPE PROVINCE.

Many, no doubt, were swashbucklers, some were cut-throats. But all were men of affairs, who had done or seen the things that mattered; and all contributed something to give variety and interest to the life of the place.

It was a notable epoch. The outside world was full of strife to establish the independence of the United States, the republic of France, the Indian Empire which Clive won and Hastings consolidated. But through all the Cape remained tranquil. In fact, it became the idyllic oasis between the wars in the East and those of the West. There was little interruption to its peace, even in 1781 when a French garrison occupied the place as a measure of precaution.

This French occupation, though brief, and by subsequent events rendered politically insignificant, had a lasting effect on South Africa. The new garrison came not only as Frenchmen, but as friends of a community already containing many cultured French Huguenots.

They were soldiers of the most brilliant court in Europe, exiled indefinitely, and bent on easing their exile. With their arrival, fashion and manners began to receive some of the attention previously bestowed on trade and administration. An elegant mode of living set in. "All strove," an old writer says, "to have handsome houses filled with costly furniture, and as imposing a retinue of slaves as possible."

The slaves at the Cape were imported. They came largely from Mozambique and Madagascar,

MUIZENBERG, CAPE PENINSULA: A FASHIONABLE SUMMER WATERING-PLACE.

but some came from the Far East, olive-skinned creoles, and Malay women often of delicate beauty.

They made good butlers, chefs, and coachmen. Some were expert musicians; others capable workers in wood, leather, metal, and stone. They relieved the Europeans of the rougher, more tiresome tasks, and thus the Cape colonists lived on the whole probably smoother, pleasanter lives than people of their station then enjoyed in Europe. Their lot was comparatively a spacious one. The placidity of the Dutch was gradually tinctured by the vivacity of the French. Fashion and manners occupied the manliest minds. The Cape beaux modelled themselves on Marly and St. Cloud, rather than on Virginia or New Amsterdam.

Thus, to an extent not usual in a colony, the Cape was in touch with, and was influenced by, much that was best in the outer world, to which must be largely attributed that love of culture—art, literature, and music—so noticeable in its people to-day. Even at the time of which we are writing, when life in a colony was generally rough, the settlers at the Cape, we read, were often considerable seigniors, who lived in houses as stately and beautiful as those of good families in Europe.

Changes were, however, afoot. New continental alliances were formed, and the French garrison departed. That they remembered the Cape long and fondly, their diaries and letters show.

In 1806 the place was finally occupied by the British. The change was political rather than

A SEAT OF LEARNING: STELLENBOSCH, NEAR CAPETOWN.

social. "Capetown," the historian records, "had become known as Little Paris." It had a society and amenities. People of taste and means, in passing, stayed a while, were captivated with the place, returned when they could, and stayed longer.

Of the elements, therefore, which make history, give a country its traditions, and shape its people, the Cape had a fortunate share. Across the international stage fate pulled the tangled threads of war and intrigue. Nations rose and fell, the Cape passed from one to the other, and so passing became the place of distinctive charm it is to-day.

THE COMPARTMENT SYSTEM IS IN OPERATION THROUGHOUT THE SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS. THIS PICTURE EXHIBITS THE DAY AND NIGHT ASPECTS OF TRAIN TRAVELLING IN SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER IV.

ON SOUTH AFRICAN TRAVEL.

> We travelled for thousands of miles together. Heaven knows if we had one common thought or fancy, or whether our eyes beheld the same world out of the carriage window.
>
> —R. L. STEVENSON.

"VISITORS," it was recently affirmed in a book of South African travel, "on going afield will be disappointed to find that the country is not as per sample in the Cape Peninsula."

Diners, it might as justly have been urged, will regret to find that the menu on the corridor train consists of more than one course.

Travel, like successful dining, is a kind of epicurism; for the one we require not only digestion but taste; for the other mental as well as optical vision.

A little imagination, a little appreciation not only of scenic and historic, but of topographical, racial, climatic, social, and industrial interest will soon make it apparent that, though the Cape Peninsula attractions are the best of their kind the country has to show, yet the attractions of the Orange Free State, Transvaal, Natal, and Rhodesia are in their way as worthy of attention.

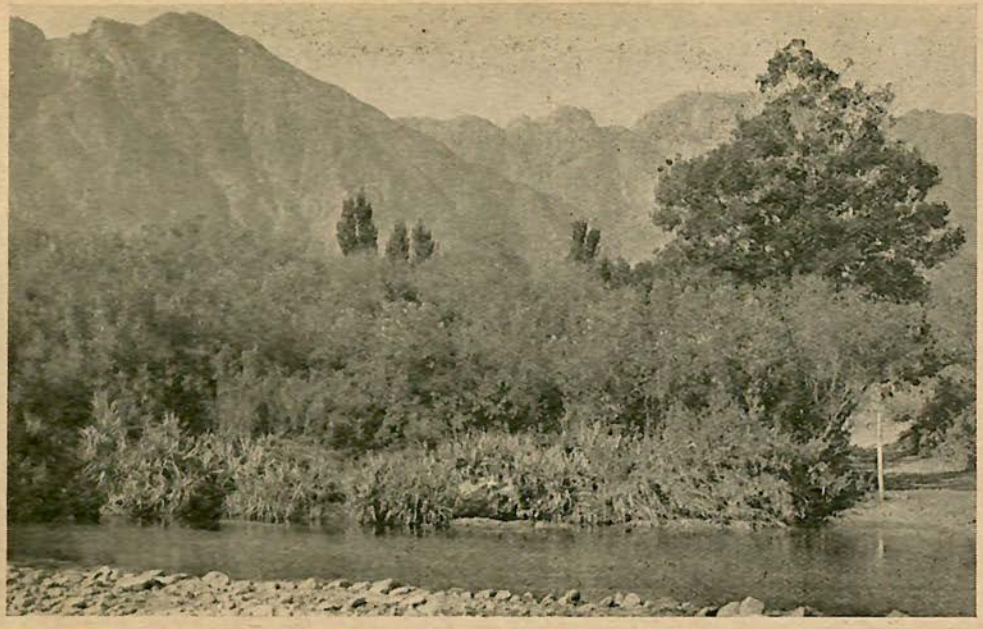
The most notable feature about inland South Africa is the abundant sunshine. It is tropical in its brilliance and persistence, without being tropically enervating; for the prevailing summer winds

DINING CAR: SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS.

which refresh South Africa come straight from cold Antarctic seas. This gift of climate makes life in South Africa peculiarly genial.

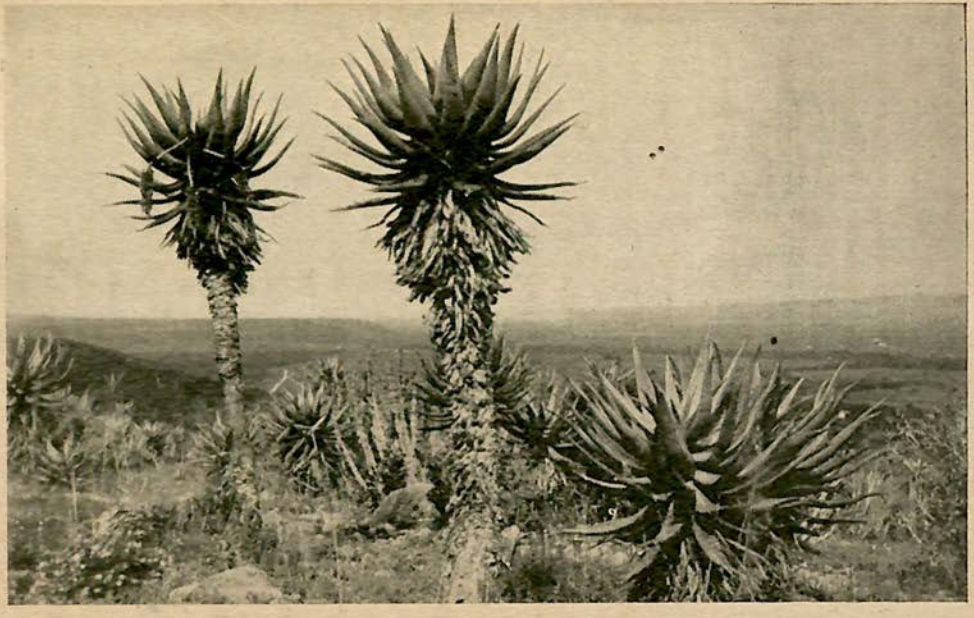
The attractions of the Transvaal, Natal, and Rhodesia may not be quickly apparent to the newcomer. South Africa does not reveal itself with the orderly sequence of a stage effect. It is a large country, its places of outstanding interest are generally far apart, and often that part of the intervening territory traversed by the railway may to the casual glance appear uninviting. For miles the eye of the uninitiated detects little to kindle enthusiasm. Nothing apparently stirs, not much grows. The hills soon cease to attract attention, the sparsely peopled plateaus oppress by their monotony. Here and there a lonely farm is seen, here and there perhaps a drooping horseman, and at intervals a discoloured stream coaxing a sun-wearied plantation from a sun-baked earth.

Much of the Great Karoo, the Transvaal high veld, and Natal is of this description, as is much of America, Australia, and Asia. The plains of Nebraska, the Desert of Wyoming, the Ridge of the Rocky Mountains between Chicago and the West are in monotony of aspect quite equal to anything in South Africa; yet who, for that reason alone, is deterred from enjoying California? Who in Spain is kept from Grenada and the Alhambra because La Manchu is a wilderness? or who in Italy is kept from Rome because the Campagna wearies the eye and mind?



IN THE HEX RIVER VALLEY.

Similarly the Karoo and the arid portions of the high veld, though of considerable area, are after all only a portion of South Africa. The Karoo has been considerably developed here and there, and is rich in possibilities, but in the main it is still only the highway to the mines, farms, and pleasure resorts—the road that leads to the wealth and beauty of South Africa; only the uninitiated mistake it for a specimen of that wealth or beauty. Yet even the Karoo, properly regarded, has its interest.



THE ALOE: TYPICAL KAROO PLANT LIFE.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT KAROO.

They have cradled you in custom, they have primed
you with their teaching,
They have soaked you in convention through and
through;
They have put you in a show-case, you're a credit to
their preaching,
But can't you hear the wild—it's calling you?

—R. SERVICE.

AT dawn, on the second day after leaving Capetown, we were in somewhat desert-like surroundings. The mist-wreathed peaks, the aromatic woods, the glint of the great Cape combers were far behind; and now the rails gleamed across the lonely, drab, but health-giving plains of the Karoo, where the pure air invigorates and the spaciousness and peace soothe.

The train swung past sphinx-like kopjes, in an environment treeless and sterile, but enlivened by wonderful atmospheric tinting and in a subtle way impressive.

The sleeping arrangements of the train were comfortable, and though we had travelled all night we awoke refreshed. After coffee and a somewhat crumpled toilet on the train, there was breakfast in the dining saloon while still we continued the journey. The service, appointments, and cuisine on the train were as good as those of an English railway. Appetites were sharp, and though there was nothing spectacular about the Karoo as seen from the railway window,

A SECTION OF THE CAPE PENINSULA COAST.

there was joy in the clean-born day, exhilaration in the splendid sunshine, and a lung tonic in the dry thin air of those upper altitudes. It was an experience in well-being.

In time we became votaries of the Karoo. Undoubtedly, it has its good points. Though in the main undeveloped, it has yielded large returns for such development as has taken place. Many of the best mineral deposits of the country are there, and its soil contains a fertility accumulated and untapped for aeons. Diamonds are taken from the Karoo; the world's principal supply of mohair comes from it; large fortunes have been made out of its ostriches, and millions of sheep thrive on its stunted herbage.

The Karoo, according to Professor Schwarz, was a flower garden two or three hundred years ago, "supporting vast herds of game, the present dry rivers running throughout the year."

To that condition the Karoo may return, when the conservation of water is more thoroughly understood and practised in South Africa. Given increased conservation of the rainfall, together with scientific dry-farming to make the most of what rainfall is conserved, many thousands may find excellent livings, and some fortunes, on the Karoo. Peach, apple, and orange orchards may one day stretch from its horizons, fields wave with corn, prize cattle stand deep in lucerne.

Sometimes even the little rain the Karoo normally gets is withheld a season or two. Then the streams dry up, cattle and sheep starve, and

THE HEX RIVER VALLEY: A PANORAMIC VIEW.

much financial loss is the result. But, after even successive droughts, the rainfall of one season need be only a few inches above the normal when all that was previously lost is regained. Given water, anything might be done with the Karoo. This has been proved at Oudtshoorn, where the waters have been led to the Karoo soil, and where in consequence the farming community is normally one of the richest in the world.

As one of the few remaining patches of the earth which are both virgin and healthy, and which may support lusty mining and farming communities of European race, the Karoo merits notice. There is in it food for thought, there is money; there is even a degree of charm. The Karoo has its admirers. Just as the life on ice-bound Canadian rivers has a compelling attraction which the lumberman and hunter feel, while the townsman sees only discomfort; just as the spacious solitudes of the Sahara will repel nine, but irresistibly draw the tenth, so life on the Karoo, though sometimes rough, is not without its congenial side; and many acquainted with society at its best, and with travel in the widest sense, have found the influence of the Karoo alluring and durable.

The Karoo has been described as a " waterless wilderness having neither beauty nor loving-kindness." It depends on the point of view. For the Karoo, to those who care for it, is a very different Karoo to that gauged from the railway carriage. The denizen of the Karoo knows what

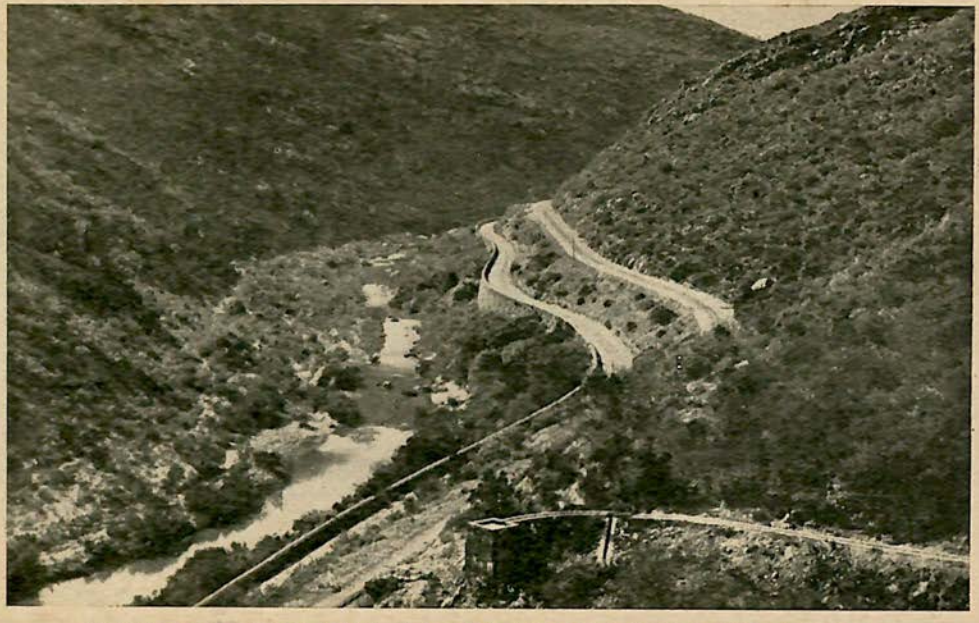
IN THE HEART OF THE KAROO: BEAUFORT WEST.

he has to face, trains and fits himself to face it, and either succumbs early in the struggle, and then drifts back to town, or in his surviving fitness finds not only profit, but pleasure, in a contest the rules of which are often severe, but never corrupt.

The life is a kind of game in which the sporting instinct gets full scope. And the charm lies, not in "beauty or loving-kindness," but in freedom and independence. Whether on the farm, or around the transport-rider's fire, or in the prospector's camp, there is the sense of well-being which follows laborious days usefully and perhaps profitably spent; the struggle may be hard, but it is straightforward and healthful.

We liked the Karoo especially towards evening. Gradually the stunted bush grows dusky, a smell of thyme and trodden veld-herbs hangs in the cooling air; the dust-trail which followed the home-coming cattle has vanished, and afar, from the smoky huts of the Kafirs, the disconsolate notes of a concertina come like a sob through the desert night. An air of pastoral peace pervades the scene. Kafir fires blink in the background, where blanketed figures lie stretched on the warm soft dust. For a while drowsy voices come from the veranda, then these too cease and sleep rules the farm.

Oppressed by the solitude of it all, the little jackal slinks across the lonely plain. In the starlight springboks graze on the dewless scrub.



TRAVERSED BY ROAD, RIVER AND RAIL: TULBAGH KLOOF, CAPE PROVINCE.

And in the crisp fresh dawn the note of the partridge calls around the solitary hills.

It does not amount to much, on paper. The charm of the life is more easily felt than expressed. But when profits and losses have been counted, and time has softened the impression of hardship, it is with longing that the erstwhile farmer, prospector, or even the invalid who has regained health on the Karoo, looks back on the old life.

It is with something of a thrill that he recalls stout battles with drought and pestilence, and with something of wistfulness that he remembers the homely hearths and comforts of the veld.

The fruits of success are sweet, but good too was the herculean task, and, at its end, the heavy humour and kindly hospitality of the wilds, when to festivities all in the district came, in the best approved style of the veld, at a hand-gallop and often for moments on one wheel, careless of lives within or without the Cape cart. For the shadeless Karoo is the scene of much whole-hearted merriment, when the sand-coloured little clumps of gums or willows round the lonely homesteads stand silhouetted against the rose flush of the sunset, and all the land lies violet and grey, and shutters are opened to the cooling evening breeze.

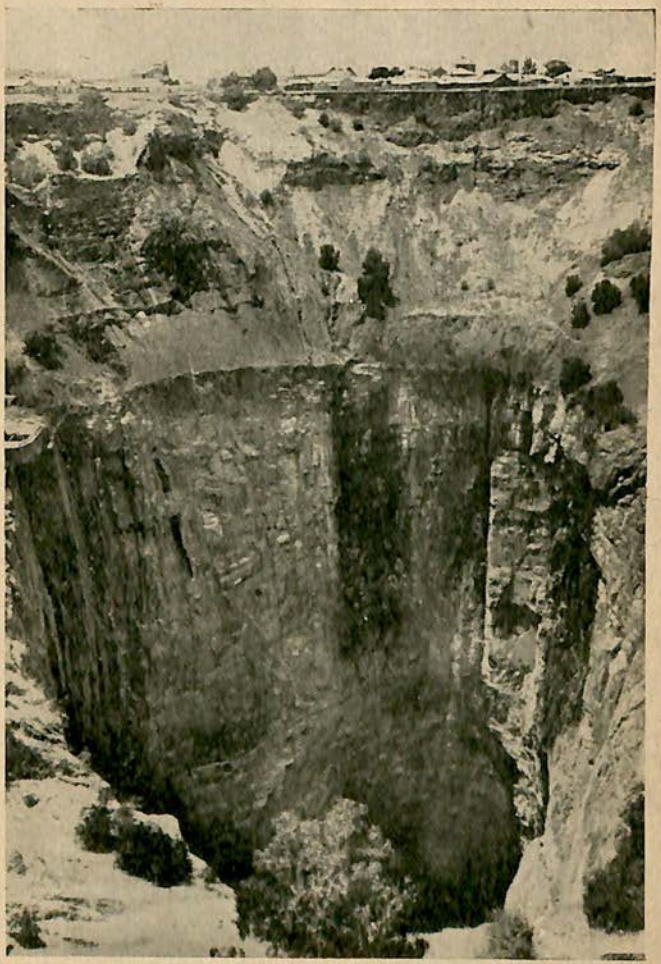
The Karoo, too, is ground in places appropriately funereal. It was the scene of some of South Africa's greatest battles, and is the graveyard of some of her finest men. To thousands all over the world it is still full of memories of the Anglo-Boer war.

HOUT BAY: ON THE COAST NEAR CAPETOWN.

They are not much to look at, those hills of Talana, Elandslaagte, Colenso, Spion Kop, Magersfontein, or Paardeberg; there is little outwardly imposing about such places as Vryheid, Modder River, Dundee, Mafeking, or Kimberley. But their names will live as long as the toll of that war is remembered on the lonely farm of the veld and the ranches of the Australian bush; in Indian messes and Canadian homesteads; in the hut of the Highland crofter and the mansion of the peer; for all took a part, and all paid something towards the final reckoning.

One can now look back on that war without passion or prejudice, mourning the fallen whatever their side. Especially is this so on the ground where they fell. The veld has reclaimed its own, and with drift-sand and weed has covered the trenches and the ravages of shot and shell. Nothing now marks the battlefield except an occasional grave, or a block-house crumbled in ruin.

It is all very peaceful and touching. The only sound is the soughing of the wind through the short rank scrub, the only shadows are those thrown by the clouds and ridges. And in the tomb-like silence of the kopjes nothing more vibrant is heard than the ring of one's boot-heel, nothing more disturbing than the echoes the hills throw back. Hot passions have cooled, hot wounds have ceased to ache, and round the unmindful dead only echoes and memories linger.



"THE BIG HOLE"—AN OLD KIMBERLEY DIAMOND MINE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VALLEY OF DIAMONDS.

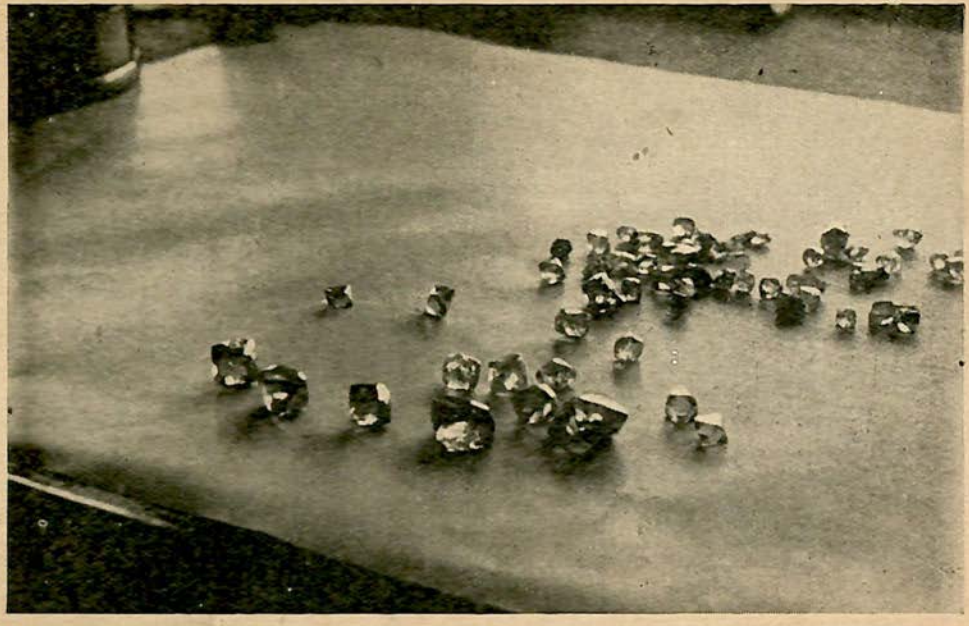
There have been few events in South Africa which have had consequences more important and far reaching than the discovery of diamonds in 1867.

—SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY.

ON the edge of the Karoo, six hundred and forty-seven miles from Capetown, is Kimberley. Probably nowhere else has so much wealth been won from so small an area as at Kimberley. From four mines, the aggregate dimensions of which are under two hundred acres, diamonds worth over two hundred and fifty-five million pounds sterling have been taken in just over fifty years; and taken, it may be believed, not without incident.

The ancients, with some show of reason, ascribed to the diamond all sorts of mystic powers, seeing in it a manifestation of the purest, most lasting beauty; and seeing in it at the same time springs prompting the most reprehensible depravity. Certainly of all forms of wealth the diamond is the most compact, and therefore peculiarly liable to stir man's cupidity, as the illicit diamond buying records of Kimberley show, and they show only a moiety of what took place.

Murder, and all kinds of minor roguery, heralded most of the older historic diamonds to their final setting. While this cannot be said of modern diamonds, social vigilance being what it now is,



A TABLE OF DIAMONDS AT A KIMBERLEY MINE.

still the winning of the wealth of Kimberley constitutes a drama in which great failures and tremendous successes figured; and to which, consequently, the lights and shades of nearly every human passion gave colour. The story of Kimberley, if ever fully told, would form an entrancing chapter of colonial history.

Like so many outstanding South African events the discovery of diamonds in 1867 was accidental. A travelling trader, attracted by the lustre of one of a number of stones with which a farmer's children were playing, conceived the idea of having it identified. It proved to be a diamond. The few farmers on the frontier were informed; the native herd-boys kept an eye open for the "shining stones"; a little semi-official prospecting was even undertaken. But nothing resulted, and gradually the opinion that South Africa had a diamond field began to be discredited. Occasional diamonds in other parts of the world had been found without leading to extensive deposits. Successive ostriches, it was contended, might have carried the South African diamond in their crops for thousands of miles. A year passed and nothing happened. Then the country thrilled from end to end. Another discovery had been made. The "Star of South Africa," a superb diamond worth £25,000, was picked up on the banks of the Vaal River. In what other country have such fortunes been had for the stooping?

This proved to be the veritable "valley of diamonds," and from Durban and Capetown

KIMBERLEY: THE DIAMOND CITY.

thousands of people flocked inland fired by the lust for wealth. Durban was nearly five hundred miles and Capetown nearly seven hundred miles from the diamond fields; and there were only a few miles of railway in the country. Yet by 1870 hundreds were eagerly delving on the banks of the Vaal River, and by the end of that year the number was estimated in thousands.

It was a striking community. The prohibitive cost of transport, the necessity for provisioning themselves indefinitely, and the uncertainty of the returns, required of those who went in the earlier days that they should have means; and some of the earlier Vaal River diggings, unlike contemporary mining camps in Australia and California, accommodated mainly the well-to-do and educated. University men on vacation, officers on pension or furlough, civil servants and professional men out for a breather, were attracted to the diamond vaults. Other classes were added later, but at the outset the banks of the Vaal were as select almost as a Mayfair drawing-room. Hands more accustomed to signing cheques, or plying lancets, or untying briefs, for once sorted gravel or even wielded picks. Habitues of club or mess room slept in the craziest shelters. Externally the place was rough, internally cultured. The garb was that of a mining camp, the manners those of Piccadilly or Rotten Row.

It was a life to move the heart of a man. Every moment of the working day, when any

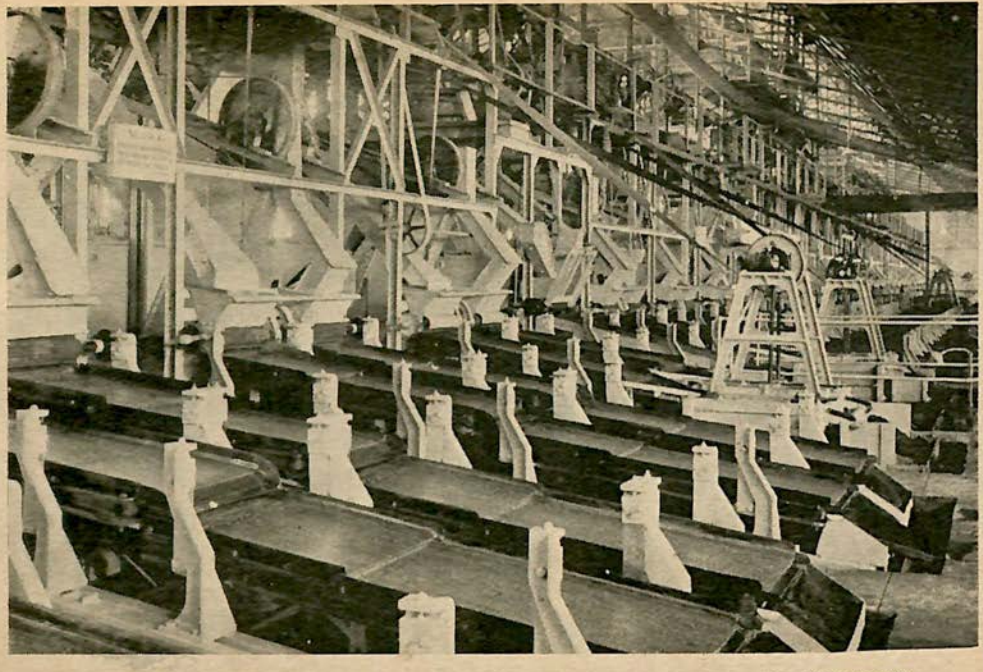
handful of gravel might hold a competence, was full of mighty possibility, and tense as around a gaming table. Then the almost Sabbath lull of evening, the lack of conventionality, the delight of a remoteness which yet held congenial companionship. Expectations beat high, muscles hardened, tempers grew less brittle than in towns. It was a life of quiet picturesqueness, long remembered by those who had known it, and in other days, amid other scenes—on the parade ground or judge's bench, in the scientist's sanctum or the forum of the senate—the lilt of the river must often have disturbed those whose brains later found employment in wider spheres, but whose hearts still remained in the gulches.

Such was the happy summer of 1870. Unfortunately, the little luck which all expected did not come to all—did not, in fact, come to many. There were plenty of diamonds on the river diggings, but not the quantities at first supposed, and then so distributed as to result in the greatest inequalities for the diggers. Therefore, when rumours of far richer fields at Kimberley, about forty miles away, began to filter through, the exodus from the river was rapid, and by the end of 1871 it was almost complete. The healthy life with its moderate gains was exchanged for the dust and misery of the dry-diggings with their promise of rapid fortune; and loneliness again settled over the claims at Hebron, Klipdrift, and Moonlight Rush.

The dry-diggings, it soon transpired, were rich, and in proportion to their richness, proved or imagined, was the cosmopolitanism of the crowd the diggings attracted. Every race and type of character was represented, every vagary of fortune experienced. But vice, though, of course, not absent in so mixed a community, had its manifestation in sharp practice rather than in lawlessness. The duels were of wits, not of revolvers.

It was a different life to that of the river. The vastness of the diamond deposits was unquestioned. New claims were daily opened, diggers arrived by the hundreds, and in a few months the surroundings were changed beyond recognition. An ocean of ramshackle structures spread in ever-widening circles. Canvas tents, the improvised lean-to, galvanised-iron huts, and great barns for provisions, sprang up. The trees the place originally boasted were quickly used for firewood; the soil, when not actually disturbed for diamonds, was ploughed to powder by the heavy traffic. Water was dear almost as wine, retailing at one time at two shillings a bucketful. There were few recreations except gambling, and they gambled on anything; on the rapidity with which respective candles would burn, on the eccentricity and endurance of pinned mosquitoes.

The main technical difference between the river-diggings and the dry-diggings was that in one the diamonds carried by flood were widely scattered, so that the claims extended for miles, with apparently no uniformity of richness; whereas in



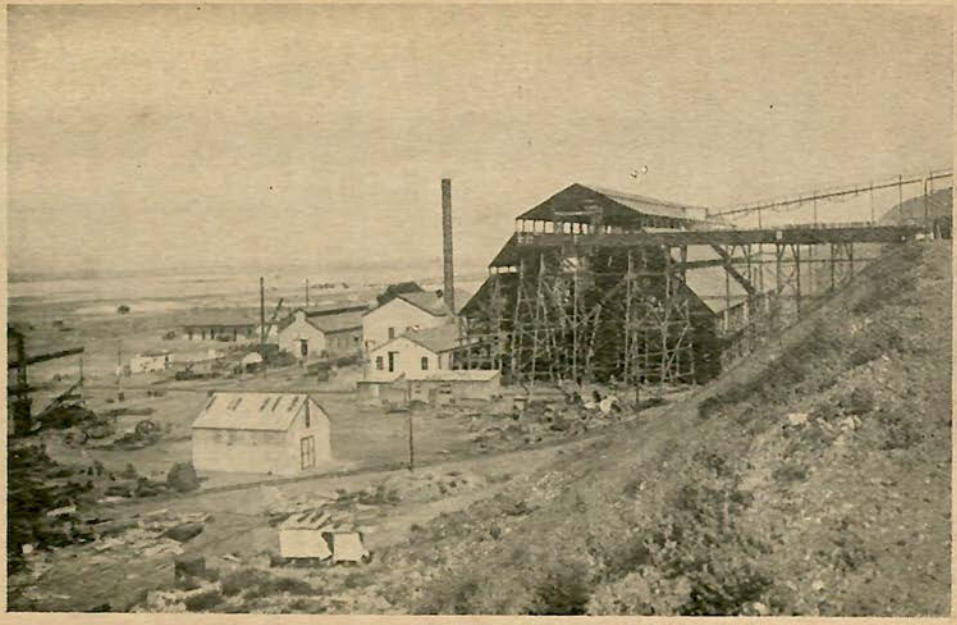
AT KIMBERLEY: GREASE TABLES ON WHICH THE GEMS ARE FINALLY UPTURNED.

the dry-diggings the diamonds, gathered probably by volcanic action, lay in compact pipes or funnels running into the bowels of the earth. These pipes now form the diamond mines—the largest holes on earth.

In time, as the Kimberley excavations grew and retaining walls between the claims caved in, millions of tons of fallen diamondless reef began to bury the workings, and costs increased. Gradually the individual was eliminated; only the well-capitalised could continue under such conditions. But even their difficulties were growing insuperable. The claims became more flooded with reef, the proportion of diamonds to the quantity of earth handled decreased, selling prices threatened to fall, as there were no means of regulating the market, and amalgamation became necessary.

How on the one hand to buy out vested interests at reasonable prices, and on the other hand convince investors that the interests were worth buying out and working, was an undertaking that might well have appalled the promoters of amalgamation, in which case Kimberley also would have become a deserted mining camp. Its fate was to be happier. The occasion produced the man—Cecil Rhodes—who not only convinced the investing public, but succeeded in reconciling the apparently irreconcilable local interests affected.

Then open-pit mining was abandoned for the underground methods of to-day. The huge craters which had roared with so much activity, and had been the scene of so many failures and successes,



SURFACE VIEW OF A KIMBERLEY DIAMOND MINE.

grew silent and apparently deserted, and the miners, now working in tunnels lit by electricity and ventilated by compressed air, delved out of sight, gradually deeper.

Gradually, too, the minor details of diamond finding improved till it does seem that human ingenuity has done its utmost to eliminate risk to life and limb, to reduce working costs by labour-saving devices, and to make the most of every ton of rock and earth dislodged. The tunnels and shafts, more spacious and cleaner than in gold or coal mining, are one of the world's sights. The machinery employed is perhaps the costliest and finest mining plant assembled in one place. The precision with which each bucket of earth is handled, till only a moiety of concentrates with an occasional diamond is left, is almost miraculous, yet simple when the details are considered; and the sight of the diamond emerging from darkness, and finally isolated in all its splendour, is as thrilling almost as a horse-race.

VICTORIA FALLS: SOUTH AFRICA'S GREATEST SPECTACLE.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VICTORIA FALLS.

The grandeur of the falls was something we had never anticipated.

—HON. WILLIAM H. CARTER (Massachusetts) in the course of a South African tour (1927).

FIFTY miles from Kimberley, after crossing the Vaal River, the railway branches on the one hand east through the Transvaal to Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Natal, and on the other hand, north to Rhodesia over the lines of the Beira & Mashonaland & Rhodesia Railways.

Rhodesia was opened for European settlement in 1892. Its climate, soil, and mineral riches seemed admirably to fit it for colonisation. To make it the home of a large European population was the project nearest the heart of Rhodes.

Rhodesia has much to interest the traveller. The attractions of the Victoria Falls are especially notable. They are unique, for though waterfalls are the commonplace of travel, those of the Zambesi are the most splendid of their kind.

Compared with other waterfalls they stand out as Nature's masterpiece. Their grandeur is varied and distinctive, their impression on all beholders is a lasting one. They form one of the few really great spectacles that no subsequent sight-seeing ever quite effaces from the memory. In fact, although the seven wonders were all the works of men, if without immodesty Nature might claim a similar recognition for one or two of her

best works, the Victoria Falls might justly be termed the eighth wonder of the world.

Our first feeling on stepping from the train was one of disillusionment. Nothing remarkable was in sight. But by the time we reached the modern hotel this feeling changed. There was a warm stillness and tropic subtlety of perfume in the air, and the general spirit of the place was so debonairly charming, that after we had made our first excursion, leisurely exploring the river in a typical African canoe, the spell of the place had us under its sway.

The waters of the Zambesi River are in that part of the country clear, cool, and deep; and for the seven miles above the waterfalls they average a mile and a quarter in width. The banks are low and square-cut, fringed with bamboo or reeds. In places, however, the banks are naked save for a rich grass, while in yet other places they are wooded; and in the distance, seen over those mighty waters, is the dense green of the teak forests: not a teak such as is seen in Burma, but still a picturesque tree.

And as the canoe glides on, the scenery becomes more and more arresting. The great river gleams between beautiful islands that lie on the sunlit waters in splashes of rich colour. Here and there a palm, raising its crest sheer from surrounding foliage, gives to the scene an Egyptian air until, landing on one of the islands, the illusion is dispelled by the suspicion that this is the Congo, and that one is among the tangled growths of

the Equator. Huge gnarled trunks of twisted forest monarchs stand in shadowy solemnity; and in some instances, lured too far by the attractive waters, have weakened at the base and toppled over, yet in that prolific land thrive and outrival in greenness, if not in vigour, their less recumbent neighbours.

Scarlet, purple, and white convolvuli festoon the heavy branches. Here and there a parasitical growth, like a great glistening snake, coils its tendrils round some forest giant, until in time strangulation ensues, and the withered branches raise their points to heaven as though in supplication. It is a botanical tragedy. Drawing its nourishment abundantly from the same generous soil, lacking only the backbone to support itself, the parasite clings to the nobler growth and finally stifles it. There is something very human about Zambesian flora.

Some such reflection is apt to come to whoever walks with Nature, as Ruskin puts it, "having no thought but how best to penetrate her meaning." For them especially the Zambesi will be full of interest, for them it will seem a river of variable moods. A river, moreover, with the power of transmitting its moods.

There is optimism where the sunlit waters ripple over the shallows, and despondency where, between abysmal walls, the waters of the chasm lurk in gloom. On lonely Kandahar Island the air is charged with longing, as though, from the whispering palm-crests, the barbarian spirit of

THE CECIL RHODES STATUE, BULAWAYO.

Ages-that-were recalled to the sighing river memories of a mighty past, æons ago, when the world was young and perhaps more joyous. In short, the Zambesi is a river of endless charm that lures one always on.

The course lay long and lonely as we penetrated the upper reaches. The shadows lengthened as we crept along, the waters lay unruffled, and in the silent woods no leaf stirred. But over the waters came the throbbing of some distant drum, where a Barotse festival was afoot; and in the kraals the evening beer-drink pended. It was for this the warriors had rested all day, the better to do themselves justice at night; and as we got nearer, the dust of long-pent energy, and the din of honest rejoicing, rose on the tropic air and ruffled the calm of the river. For the warriors stamped, and narrated what terrible fellows they were, and slew whole but imaginary *impis;* and the women encouraged their prowess with shrill shouts, and sustained their energies with much Kafir beer.

And thus as a preparation for the great and final charm of the Falls themselves, we drifted idly on from island to island, seeing continuously something picturesque or unusual, until the time for returning arrived. Then the canoe was turned, and before us lay the loveliest sight imaginable—the Zambesi at sunset. Into the transparent waters deep shadows sank and lay. The perfume came from hidden orchids, strange odours of a foreign land; and something of the

THE ZAMBESI RIVER ABOVE THE FALLS.

barbaric spirit of the place pervaded, especially the woods, and one felt that here one looked on a corner of the world that is much as it was in the beginning, unconventional in its beauty and freedom, where by the mighty river the antelopes still come at dusk to drink, and the teak still stands in trackless forests, and the wild turpentine mingles with the acacia to scent the languorous air with old-world odours. Through the glossy green tree tops the slanting rays filtered faintly, save where some solitary palm, stark in the flare of the sun, diffused the failing light, as the canoe glided swiftly and softly through the gathering southern night.

And so to dinner. The cuisine was good, the attendance and general appointments at the Victoria Falls Hotel quite in accordance with the best traditions. This is claiming much. It is, however, worth mentioning because it helps to make the trip the pleasant experience it is, as after a day of sight-seeing one is glad to return to the baths, the electric fans, the ice, and the many solid comforts of the hotel. Glad, in the dusk, thankfully to enjoy the cooling breezes on the spacious verandas, to form one of what in the season is often a most interesting gathering from all quarters of the world; and, remembering one's environment, glad that all this has been made possible and congenial in what till recently was a corner of Darkest Africa.

The features of main interest at the Victoria Falls are four: the river and islands above the

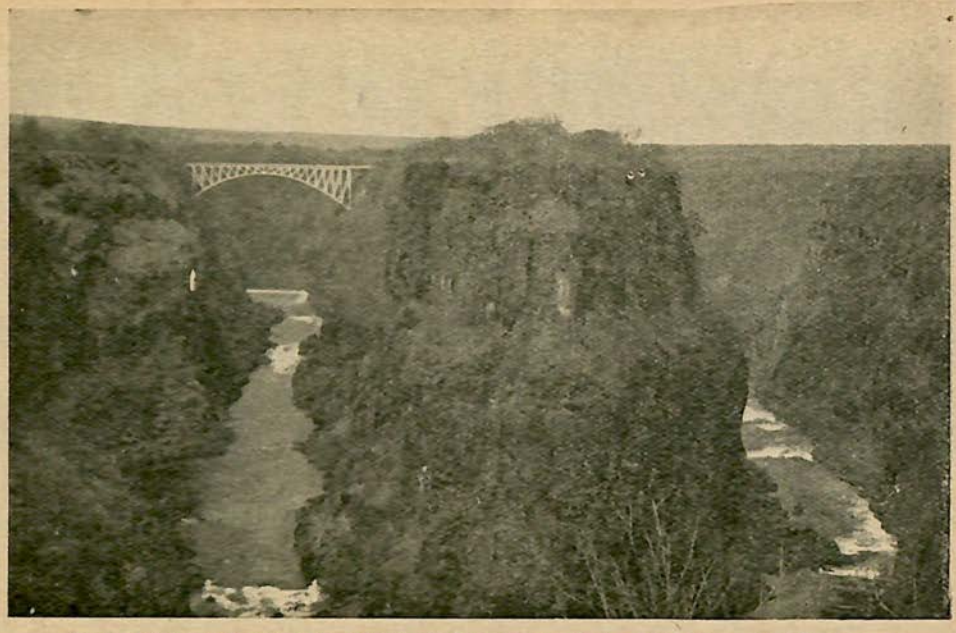
THE FALLS: A CENTRAL VIEW.

gorge; the palm grove below; the rain forest; and the actual falls.

The palm grove is an exquisite nook. It is as though the gods, designing for themselves an adequate playground on earth, had conceived, for the recreation of their leisure, the greatest of all permanent spectacles—the Victoria Falls; and had then gathered, into one glowing whole, scenes for which the Orient and the Occident had been ran sacked. The fashionable throng in the hotel grounds during the season suggests a European spa of note. Parts of the river might be the Nile. Some of the islands, as we have said, resemble the Congo. And the palm grove might easily pass as a slice from beautiful Ceylon.

The rain forest is a wood in which day and night rain falls almost continuously, so that for this part of the trip one comes in a mackintosh. It is a light warm rain, the spray from the opposite falls, which descends gently through the brilliant sunshine into bright airy glades, where it burnishes every leaf, moistens every trunk, refreshes the banks of moss and ferns, gives twinkling eyes to tiny blossoms, more purity to the lily, added magnificence to the orchid; dew-gemming all, till from the sun and moisture rainbows appear, and tremble over the place all day, and even on moonlit nights.

At last one turns to the Falls themselves; they eclipse all that went before; they are really superb. One cannot but be fascinated by a volume of water a mile and a quarter wide, falling four hundred



THE GORGE BELOW THE FALLS—SPANNED BY THE WORLD'S HIGHEST BRIDGE.

feet in a splendour of life, light and sparkle. Such a spectacle would be impressive anywhere. What makes its appeal so irresistible is that, unlike Niagara, this glorious cascade, tumbling in cool white purity, is presented with a tropical environment, with never a chimney or house or other work of man in sight.

Without haste, without pause, solemnly grand and impressive, the great waters descend. It is the most teasing yet most satisfying of spectacles. Teasing in the thought that so much grandeur should without stopping be pouring itself away for the entertainment often of only one traveller; but satisfying in the reflection that, nevertheless, it will not exhaust itself. It is a moral in stone and water on the wastefulness yet permanence of Nature. "Nations fall, arts fade, but Nature never dies." When Nero fiddled to the burning of Rome, those waters probably poured as they still do, and as they will probably continue to do through the centuries—a spectacle of lavish beauty, to furnish which half a continent has been drained of its life-giving waters.

These Falls are the centre of extremes; like a vast curtain let down from heaven, they partition mighty contrasts.

Indeed, it is more than a contrast. It is a shock. Imagine a tropical plain through which one of the world's great rivers flows languidly. Suddenly the peaceful scene is turned to pandemonium. The river, as it were, stands abruptly on end. It consigns its whole vast volume, not

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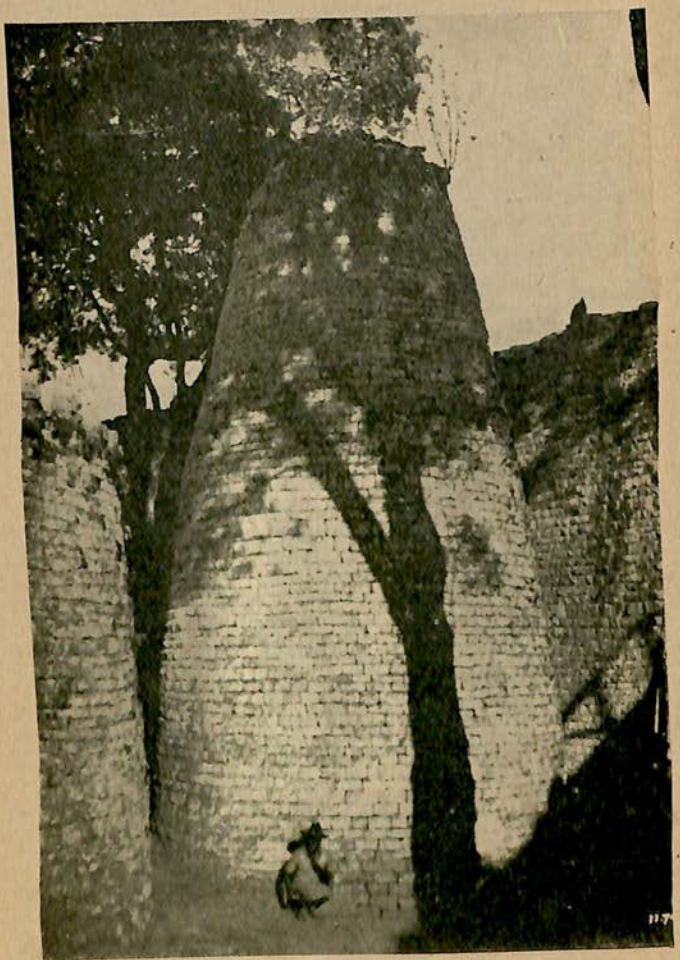
VICTORIA FALLS: THE CHASM AT SUNRISE.

to another plain, but to a narrow chasm four hundred feet down, where the mighty waters leap and smoke in their frantic endeavour to escape. There in the depths, great airs roused by concussion moan to the tortured waters, and gloom abides with discord. It would be an awesome place were it not that the Master Artist has by this dramatic contrast so contrived the repellent and the attractive, the forbidding and the entrancing, that out of the chasm at one's feet one of the greatest spectacles on earth arises, on the one side the precipice over which the Zambesi plunges, with a shock like that of a world gone askew; and on the opposite side, haloed by rainbows from the leaping waters, the dazzling rain forest is perched.

The Falls are seen from many points. Each has its own attraction and novelty. The full view from the centre of the rain forest is perhaps the most impressive. But a view, probably because it was our last, that moved us most, was the one from Livingstone Island, the spot from which Livingstone first saw the Falls. On a bank of papyrus, in cool solitude, the whole of tropical Africa pulsing around, he must be a singular spectator whose heart and mind remain unstirred.



CONICAL TOWER, ZIMBABWE RUINS.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ZIMBABWE RUINS.

Tell us ye dead,
Will none of ye return,
Disclose the secret?
O! That some courteous ghost would blab it out!

UNLIKE the Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, the place second of interest to the traveller in Rhodesia, is not spectacular. There is indeed a wild southern beauty about it, but mainly it attracts by suggestiveness; it is a mystery, a place with a hidden but probably romantic past.

After entering Rhodesia from the south, the first place of importance is Bulawayo. From there the railway has been laid, on the one hand north-west to the Victoria Falls, and on the other hand north-east to Salisbury. From the Victoria Falls the railway connects with the Belgian Congo, and forms a section of the Cape to Cairo project. From Salisbury the railway turns south-east to Beira, a port in Portuguese East Africa.

Less than half-way between Bulawayo and Salisbury is Gwelo. From that town a branch railway has been built, also south-eastwards, to Fort Victoria; and seventeen miles from Fort Victoria is Zimbabwe, several hundred miles from the coast, but in a straight line with the old East African port of Sofala.

There in the wild heart of Mashonaland, buried by a heavy foliage, amid secluded hills and valleys where probably no modern white man had pre-

viously trodden, great granite ruins, many believe of a vanished civilisation, were in 1868 discovered by a wandering hunter.

There are several edifices. The largest is in the form of a rough oval. Between its extreme points it is two hundred and ninety feet in length by two hundred and twenty feet in breadth; more than half as long and nearly as broad as St. Paul's Cathedral, with walls in places thirty-five feet high and sixteen feet thick at their base. The whole has been constructed of small, well-chiselled granite blocks, cleverly fitted together without mortar.

Adjacent there is an ingeniously built hill citadel, also of granite, and between these two main structures there are traces of minor ruins.

All the buildings are roofless. Many of the walls are partly razed, but others stand firm, so little affected by the passage of time that the chisel-marks on the granite are undimmed, suggesting either a comparatively recent origin or a singularly preservative climate.

Who built these structures ? When were they built ? What became of the builders ?

Nobody knows. Archæologists are unable to agree, and many picturesque theories about Zimbabwe have consequently arisen. In the main, however, opinion is divided into two schools, both of interest not only to the antiquary, but to the general traveller with a taste for the mystic.

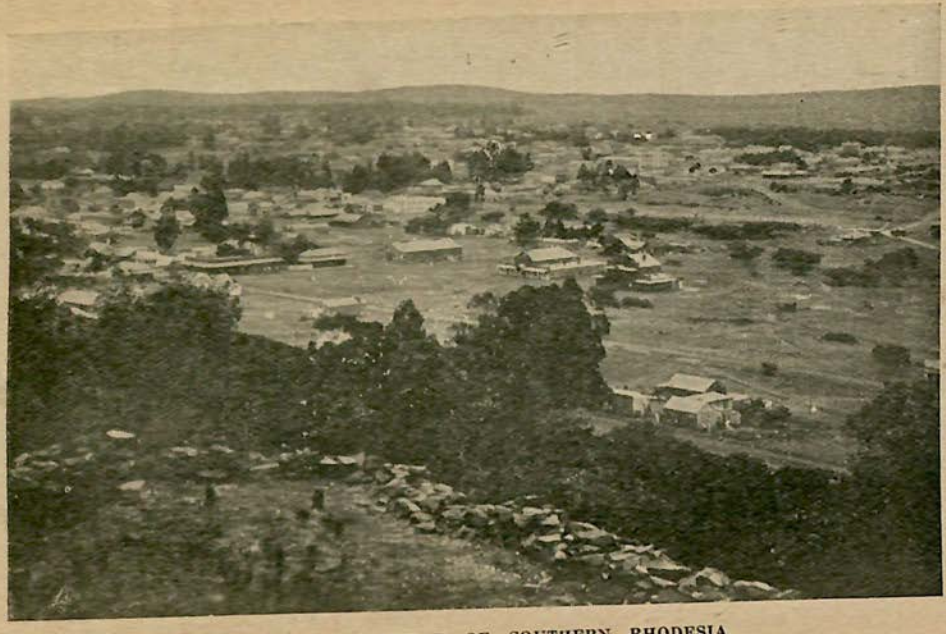
On the one hand, there are those who hold that the structures at Zimbabwe are not only old, but

ancient, a legacy from a civilised people, probably foreigners. On the other hand, there are those who look on the structures as mediæval, and the work of local natives.

Each theory opens up a field of fascinating speculation, the one implying that away in antiquity, when what are now Britain and France were still barbaric countries, a foreign civilisation flourished at Zimbabwe; and the other, if the structures are of mediæval origin, implies that the natives of Central and South Africa, who have been looked on as a people always rudimentary, had, as a matter of fact, once knowledge, skill, initiative, and a mode of life comparing not unfavourably with that of mediæval Europe.

Each school makes out a good case. What the mediæval school overlooks, however, is that in the nature of things there cannot at present be finality of view on the matter. They consequently weaken their case when instead of marshalling their points as possibilities, or at best probabilities, they proclaim them as if they were demonstrable facts, and speak with certainty about what is at best doubtful.

Yet the theory that the Zimbabwe structures are probably ancient is by the mediæval school not only rejected, but thrown out with contempt. This judgment of the matter, apart from its impressive forcefulness, has little to justify it. It is based on evidence that is not only inconclusive but wholly negative. Mediæval objects, this school says, " were found in such position as to



SALISBURY: CAPITAL OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA.

be necessarily contemporaneous with the foundations of the buildings." Nankin china of a mediæval period was indeed found by some excavators, who from this decided that the edifice was built after the importation of the china.

Having thus, to their own satisfaction, settled when the structures were built, the mediæval school draws attention to the absence of inscriptions, from which they argue that the builders were unlettered; and they point out that the buildings at Zimbabwe, except that they are of greater dimensions and more solidly built, resemble similar structures in other parts of Rhodesia; from which it is concluded that the builders were local natives.

This view of the matter deserves respect, but not the exaggerated respect that its authors demand for it. It may be the right view, but it is not demonstrably right. In fact, a good deal can be urged against it. For instance, in North Africa the presence or absence of inscriptions proved little, until the word "Cleopatra" was first deciphered by Egyptologists; while the discovery of not dissimilar ruins along the Persian Gulf in Mesopotamia and in Southern Arabia, all without inscriptions, suggests that a builder's literacy cannot always be safely judged by the presence or absence of inscriptions. And if the building of what now are minor ruins throughout Rhodesia really was designed and supervised by local natives, which is by no means certain, it is at least as probable that those local natives got

their idea of such building from Zimbabwe as that they introduced it there.

Although, therefore, the case which the mediæval school makes out is an important contribution to the subject, it is by no means the last word. However, even they do not go so far as to ascribe the erection of the Zimbabwe structures to a date later than the fourteenth century. Starting from this basis, those of the antique school proceed. They point to the generally accepted belief that, within historical times, but prior to the advent of Europeans, what is now Mashonaland was occupied by Bantu tribes. But the Bantus, as far as has been ascertained, were not builders in the larger acceptance of the term. They or their descendants may indeed have erected the more inferior, less durable, stone structures found in different parts of Rhodesia, but these, both in size and workmanship, were mere huts compared with the structures of Zimbabwe or Inyanga. That these inferior structures were imitations of those at Zimbabwe, that the Bantus, if they were builders, got their idea from Zimbabwe and did not introduce it there, seems the more probable when it is recalled that, as far as can be ascertained, the Bantus never built superior stone structures elsewhere in Africa.

Having thus set up a rebutting theory to show who did not build the Zimbabwe structures, the antique school turns to a consideration of who may have been the builders: here one of the

most fascinating fields of speculation opens before the inquirer.

If the builders were not natives, they must, of course, have been foreigners; and if they were foreigners, why out of whole huge Africa did they pick on so remote a spot?

The mineral riches of that part of the country may be a clue. Throughout what is now Rhodesia and the Transvaal, hundreds of old workings have been discovered in which somebody once mined gold. Modern metallurgists who have examined these workings agree that the vanished miners, whoever they were, knew a good deal about metallurgy, and throughout the country successfully handled hundreds of thousands of tons of rather intractable ore. In fact, although only some of the old workings have so far been discovered, it has been estimated that the gold extracted by the miners of old would to-day be valued at not less than £75,000,000.

If it be urged that those workers, or rather the designers and supervisors of those works, were South African natives, then in the general opinion of South Africa it was a native very different from the one known to-day, or from the native of whom history has any trace. He must have been a man not only with the ability to design and supervise mining, which is a very different thing from merely working in a mine; and with the vision to see the necessity for mining, and the

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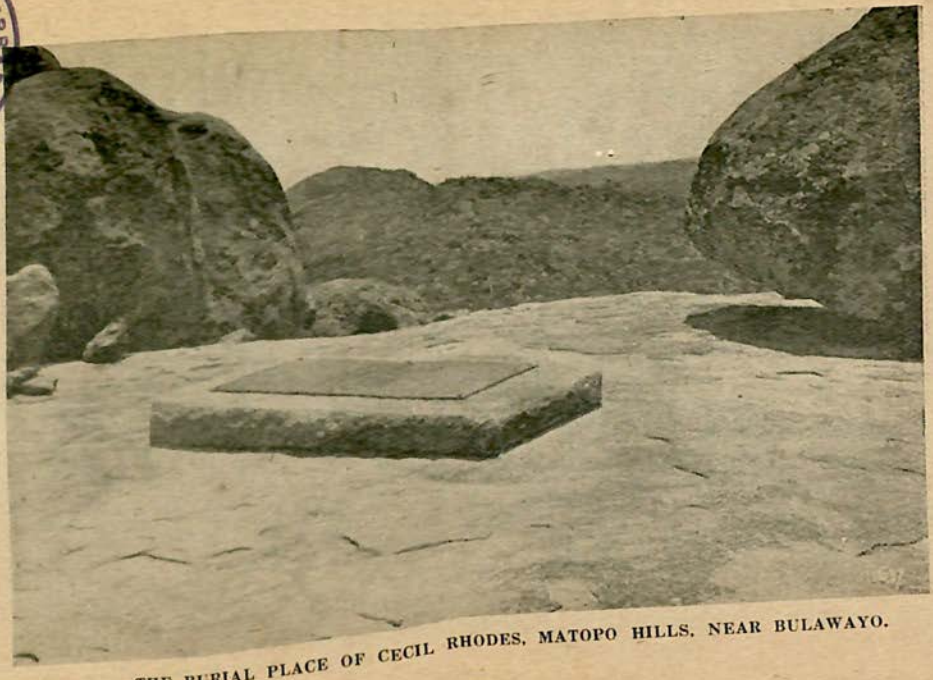


THE BURIAL PLACE OF CECIL RHODES, MATOPO HILLS, NEAR BULAWAYO.

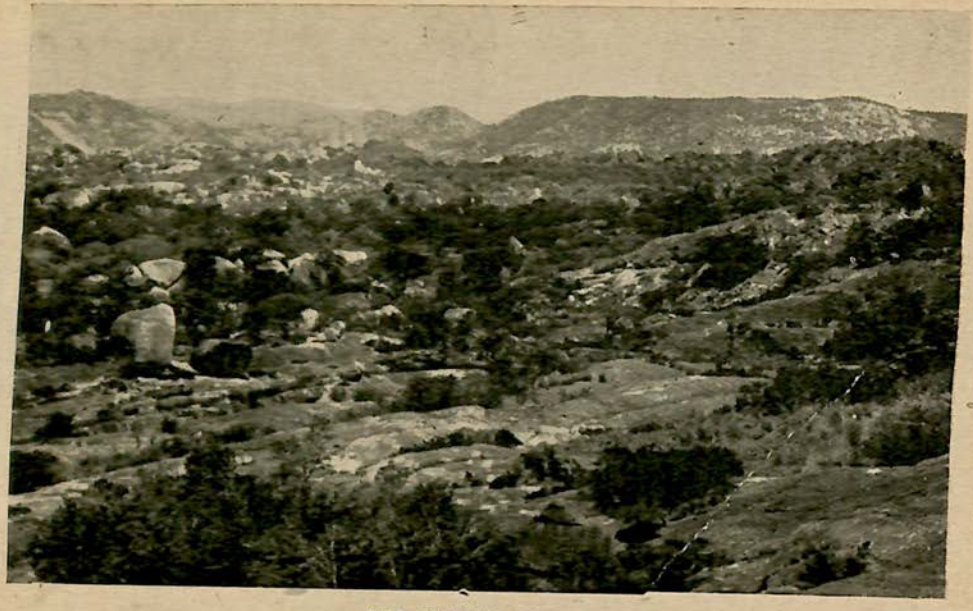
energy and resolution to pursue that necessity, which a pastoral people like the Bantus generally lack.

Hence the weakness of the mediæval theory. It takes a people like the Bantus, who during their intercourse with Europeans have on the whole remained almost as rudimentary as when first encountered four centuries ago; and it assumes, because its theory requires such an assumption, that six hundred years ago the Bantus were a people highly developed in the mechanics and chemistry of mining, in structural and military engineering such as there are evidences of in the hill citadel of Zimbabwe, and in the ramifications of what must have been a considerable commercial system to have absorbed so much gold as was taken from the old workings.

It is hard to accept such an assumption. It seems at least just as probable that a foreign people, sufficiently developed to have a use for gold in large quantities, regulated or controlled the Rhodesian workings in the old days, and did so through an organisation of outposts, which would account for the minor and more distant ruins, and from a central depot or metropolis, which would account for Zimbabwe.

If then we admit the possibility, or rather the probability, that the gold taken from Rhodesia was taken by foreigners, it remains next to consider when it was taken and by whom.

When closely examined, the Zimbabwe structures do not seem of great age. The granite shows

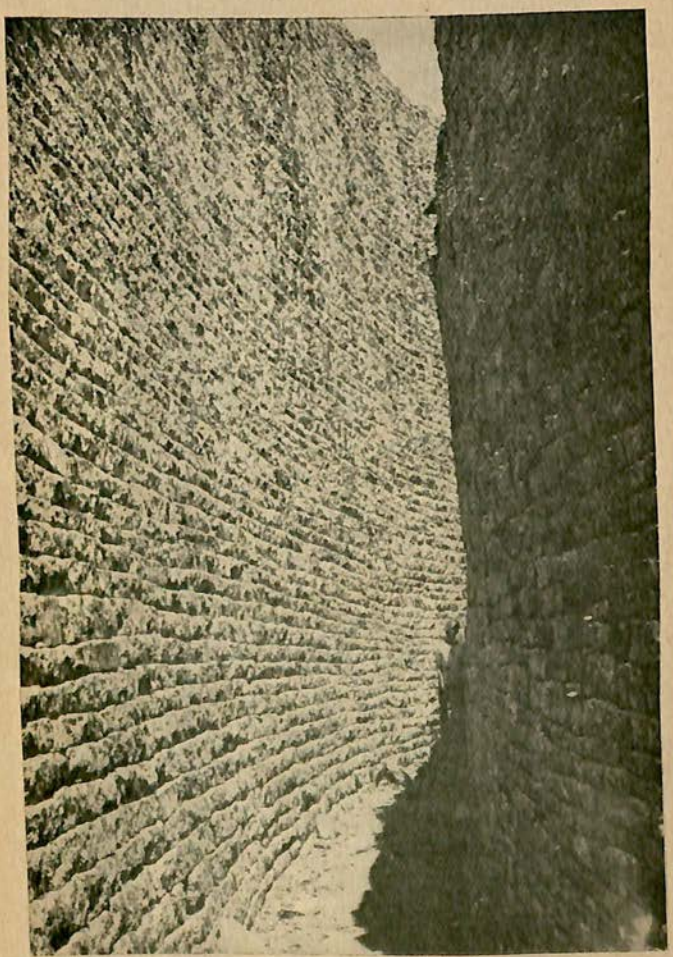


THE MATOPO HILLS.

so little discoloration or mouldering, the very chisel-marks are so little weather-worn, as to suggest almost a modern origin. But, however much they may disagree on some points, archæologists agree at least on this, that the Zimbabwe structures are probably at least six hundred years old. Even the mediæval school admits this on evidence we need not examine in detail here.

This admission is important, for if, in the six centuries allowed by the mediæval school, the weather effect on the granite has been so slight as to be almost imperceptible, twelve or twenty centuries might pass without the weather effect being very striking. So that fresh though the granite seems, nothing in its appearance alone is sufficient to prove whether it was cut and placed in the fourteenth century or at an earlier or later date. This gives an increased interest and importance to certain hints in old Arabian and Persian and in later Portuguese manuscripts. These are very vague and perhaps misleading, but seem to imply that the Zimbabwe structures were not only in existence but disused a thousand years ago.

If this possibility be admitted, and the evidence in its favour is as admissible as the necessarily fragmentary and circumstantial evidence on which the mediæval theory is based, then it is only a step further to connect Zimbabwe structures with the Phœnicians; and all the barriers are then down which prevented the imagination from wandering in a field more picturesque perhaps than strictly archæological, but not altogether fanciful or im-

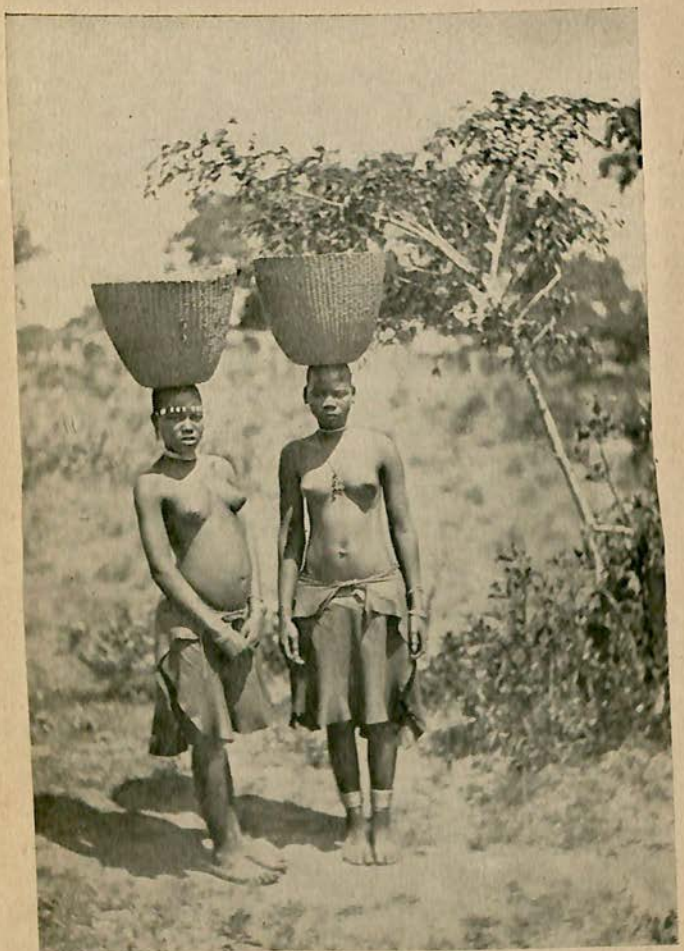


PARALLEL PASSAGE—ZIMBABWE RUINS.

probable. We refer to the theory that those old workings in Rhodesia are the veritable King Solomon's mines of romance; and that Zimbabwe was the depot or metropolis where the gold from surrounding workings was gathered under military protection for dispatch by caravan to the coast, most likely to Sofala, there to be shipped perhaps to Palestine and Babylon.

At one time great quantities of gold came to Palestine and Babylon, nobody knows from where, and great quantities left Rhodesia, perhaps at the same time, nobody knows for where. Hence the contention of the antique school, that there may be some connection between the gold of ancient Ophir and Rhodesia, and that perhaps the structures at Zimbabwe were built by Phœnicians, Chaldean or Sabean colonists, sent to procure that gold, or by their descendants or pupils; and this seems more plausible than that Zimbabwe was the spontaneous conception and accomplishment of uninstructed Bantus.

Those races, but not the Bantus, were sun and star worshippers. Sacred hawks, emblematic of Venus, Star of Maternity, were used by them. At Zimbabwe similar birds of soapstone, crudely carved as one might expect among colonists who included the engineers but not the sculptors of the nation, have been found. And as the sun engenders the fruitfulness of the earth, it also became an emblem of the sensual nature worship, being represented by symbols of generative power,



MAKALANGA MAIDENS IN RHODESIA.

similar to those once carried in the Bacchic processions of the Greeks. What, without much violence to the imagination, may be identified with these symbols has been found at Zimbabwe; and the temple itself, if it was a temple, is on the whole not unlike in essentials, if not in finish and detail, ancient ruined temples in the Near East. These it resembles more closely than it does anything in Central or South Africa. One feature especially, the interior cone of the Zimbabwe temple, corresponds to the sacred cone in the ruins of the Phœnician temple at Byblos; and it has similarities also to the "two very large phalli, about thirty cubits high," described by Lucian as standing in the temple of Hieropolis in Mesopotamia.

To have extracted £75,000,000 worth of gold from an ore that taxes even modern methods of extraction, and to have done this by hand-crushing, must have entailed much labour, even though many years were occupied; and therefore considerable organisation in directing, controlling, and provisioning that labour would have been required; hence the necessity for founding a colony, if the people who handled the gold were foreigners.

Military protection would be the first requirement throughout the country wherever gold was mined or carried by caravan, but especially at the central site, where the gold was collected for shipment; hence the hill citadel at Zimbabwe.

That central protection would gradually become the hub round which the whole organisation would revolve. There the higher military and administrative officers, with their staffs and attendants, would establish themselves. This central site would become the place of call, and of temporary sojourn, for all minor functionaries travelling to and fro; it would also become the terminus to which caravans from the interior would go, and from which caravans for the coast would start. At that central place, too, would be employment for all who catered for the needs or pleasures of the colonists, and for the thousands of slaves who quarried, trimmed, carried, and placed in position the granite required for those great structures; hence the belief that Zimbabwe was a metropolis.

It could not have been a city in the sense that Jerusalem or Babylon was, but was at best the utilitarian abode of colonists who regarded their stay as an exile—an exile to be endured only till they were relieved by their successors.

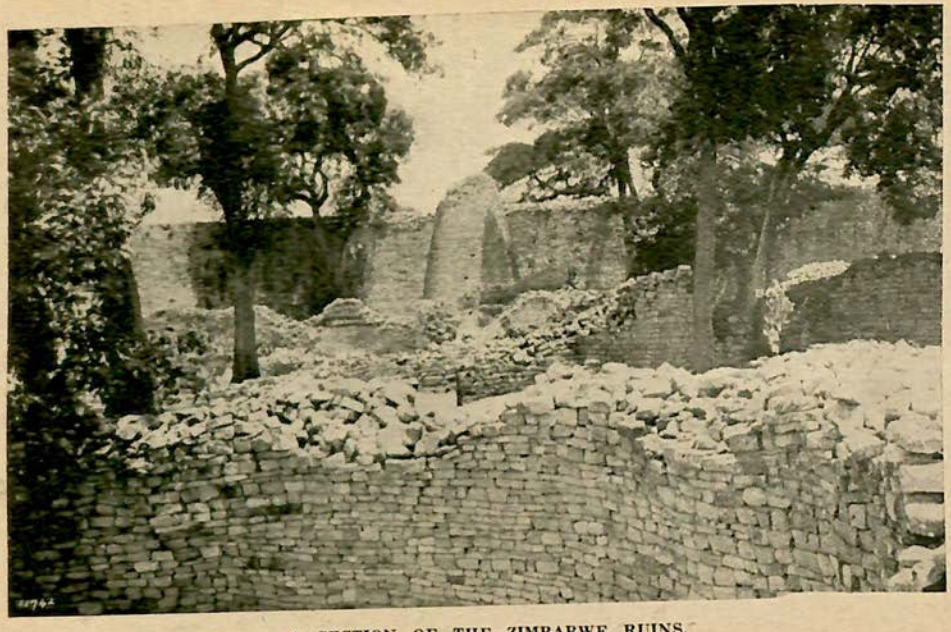
The structures at Zimbabwe lend colour to this view. They are not ornamental, or even strictly symmetrical. They appear to have been built for use rather than show. Still they are impressive in their proportions, the more so considering their situation; and notable by reason of the skill with which the granite was chiselled and fitted, in such a manner as to suggest that little in the building line would have been beyond the builders had they deemed it worth their while.

Such a community, if foreign, not Bantu, would require religious ministration; hence the so-called Elliptical Temple, outside whose walls, as far as can be judged, the main residences were placed.

Hence the theory that Zimbabwe was not only a metropolis, but populous; and not only populous, but probably Phœnician, Chaldean, Sabean, or Persian. That theory is not adduced here for general acceptance; the evidence is such that no theory about Zimbabwe should be advanced dogmatically. But whatever theory one holds, Zimbabwe is worth a visit. Seen from the citadel, the valleys and hills are inviting. In the distance the Cotapaxi Mountains stand, rugged and sharp. Nearer lies the blue Beroma range. On the right the white walls of the temple rise, and in front, straight in the path of the sun, is the Valley of Ruins.

There is a haunting influence about the place. It is not the scenery, which is like that in other parts of Rhodesia. It is not any splendour or magnitude of the ruins, which, like even the very pyramids, are, as a matter of fact, stultified rather than enhanced by the setting. The fact is that as a spectacle the Zimbabwe ruins leave one cold. Many who have visited them, not to gratify curiosity or indulge the imagination, but merely to see something, have left unimpressed, as in the same spirit they would come away unimpressed even from Pompeii or the Coliseum.

But for those with a little imagination, Zimbabwe is a fascinating place to muse in. There is

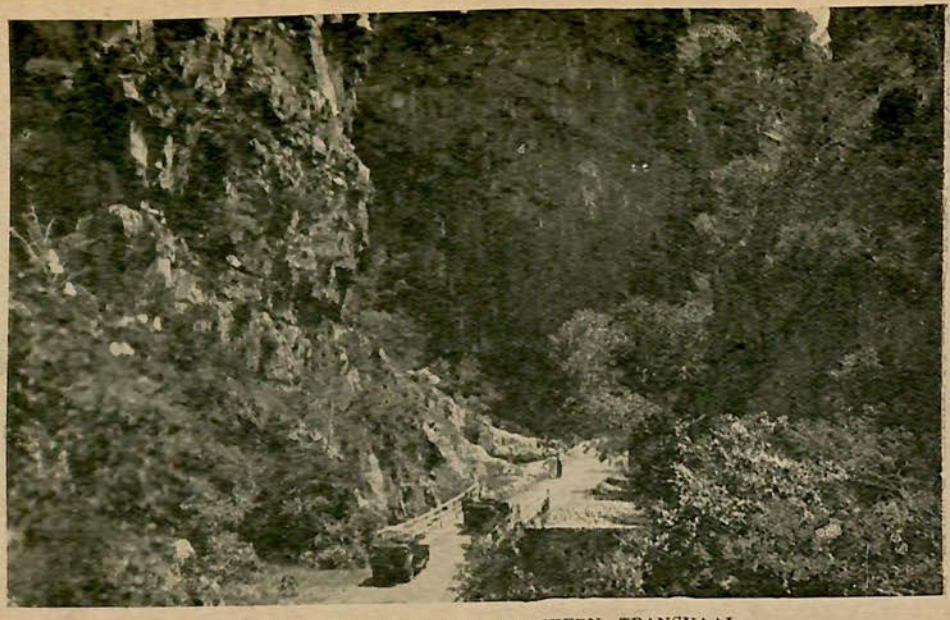


A SECTION OF THE ZIMBABWE RUINS.

a brooding atmosphere about it, suggesting tragedy and conducing to the melancholy but fascinating task of speculation about the past, on a strange spot, where probably the past was strange. Maybe anointed worshippers, practising old, old rites, once thronged those floors. Maybe the incantations of strange priests once rose upon that tropic air, calling on unheeding gods. It may be that to the sound of conch and cymbal white-armed slave girls, from Tyre and Nineveh, danced there to regale the leisure of their lords.

But silence now reigns with the sepulchral shadows over the sombre ruins, among the lonely valleys and hills. It is a city of the dead. And when the sun has set and the valleys have ceased to flame, when the foliage rustles faintly and light breezes murmur and moan through the empty corridors, one feels the spirit of the place, time seems to pause, the years roll back, and one turns expectantly at every rustle, as though it bodied forth an antique robe, and at every murmur as though it were the echo of a vanished voice.

"Into the darkness whence they came,
They passed, their country knoweth none;
They and their God without a name,
Partake the same oblivion.
Their work they did, their work is done,
Their gold, it maybe, shone like fire
About the brows of Solomon,
And in the house of God's desire."



A MOUNTAIN PASS IN THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL.

CHAPTER IX.

ACROSS THE VAAL.

Before Man made us Citizens, Great Nature made us Men. —LOWELL.

SOUTH AFRICA has not the bitter winter that in some countries makes life harsh, nor summer so intense as to be enervating. Frost is severe, generally, for only about two months in the twelve, and then only on the higher altitudes. Snow is rare. Indeed, the South African climate is on the whole so agreeable that outdoor life is attractive all the year round.

To this must be attributed much that was peculiar in the development of the country. Its early colonists were lured by the delightful climate into becoming wanderers. They scattered over the country, each when and where his fancy suggested, at the peril of life, no doubt, as the native tribes of that age were warlike and treacherous; but without the necessity, so drastic in harsher climates, of first preparing a home. The frontiersman and his family left the settlement more or less casually, with the knowledge that a roof and shop supplies were not essential to life in the South African wilds of his day. Skill with the gun, a sound digestion, and courage were the only really indispensable requirements.

Consequently as far back as the Van der Stels, the tendency was to roam. Even those colonists

whose ancestors had been accustomed to the staid village life of the Netherlands, France, Germany, or Scandinavia, acquired a taste for the wilds, which drew them from the comparative ease and security of the settlements at the Cape. Nor were they drawn by the prospect of wealth so much as by a passion for space and solitude, which something in the air or soil of the country bred.

Thus the frontiersmen became landholders rather than farmers. They wandered to where land in large blocks might be had for the taking. They wandered far from their kind, cut themselves off from civilising influences. They produced little, sold less. Their habits became simple in the extreme, their wants were necessarily reduced to a minimum. The tent wagon, oftener than a fixed abode, became their home. They learnt to furnish their table and wardrobe largely, and at a pinch exclusively, with the aid of the gun, for game was plentiful.

In the development of South Africa there thus arose a distinct people known as the Trek Boers.

They formed the first outposts of civilisation in South Africa. They were, however, more a bulwark between civilisation and barbarism than a developing force. As a bulwark, behind which others were enabled to develop, they did great service to the country, facing many ordeals. But as a developing force (if by national development is meant greater access to material comforts) instead of keeping in the van of progress, where heredity and the natural excellence of the country

should have placed them, they fell to the rear. They grew independent of towns, and as gradually they lost touch with the outside world and the current thought thereof, so gradually they developed ideas and traits of their own; ideas and traits so simple as perhaps to seem crude, but, like those of the Spartans, so virile that they endured.

In the early days a considerable number of South African colonists acquired those traits. To them must be credited much of the opening up of the country, but they must be debited also with much of the conservatism which delayed or tempered the development of much of the country. While there were wilds to conquer, the Trek Boers were admirable. When the wilds had been subdued, the barbarian tamed, the savage beasts destroyed or driven north; when all the pains had been suffered, and all the penalties preliminary to opening up new country had been paid, those who in the main had suffered and paid claimed their just prescriptive rights; and sometimes they claimed more than it was convenient, or safe, for the authorities to concede. The Dutch governors up to 1806 had much trouble with the colonists on the frontiers; their successors, the British governors, had more.

The European communities on the frontier were small and widely scattered. The Kafir tribes were many and aggressive. And in those days the Kafir was a fighting man—powerful in physique, well-exercised to sustain exertion, and not without

A NORTHERN TRANSVAAL RIVER.

discipline and tactics in battle. War was the object of his life—to defend his herds from other blacks when compelled, to augment them by looting from whites or blacks when possible.

The Trek Boer was by temperament and habit peculiarly fitted for dealing with such an enemy. Fighting for his life with weapons in his hands, he was a match for many natives; fighting for family and wife—the latter like a modern Deborah helping in the affray—his performances were sometimes marvellous. He always gave a good, and generally a successful, account of himself in border warfare. But the odds were often against him, massacres at times occurred, and at best he and his family lived in jeopardy.

Yet military assistance from the authorities was as a rule neither offered nor expected. The European military resources of South Africa were admittedly insufficient to cope adequately with native depredations in so sparsely Europeanised but large an area as the roving instincts of the frontiersmen had caused them to spread over. Those resources could be made adequate only at a cost out of all proportion to the revenue and apparent worth of the regions affected. Not having the means for putting a forcible restraint on the natives, the authorities sought to restrain by precept—to conciliate rather than fight the natives.

The frontiersman had wandered into his plight of his own free will, and the authorities, conscious that such plight might disturb the settlements

nearer the capital, instead of attempting the foredoomed task of rendering life and property in the wilds so safe that others would be tempted to settle in those always troublesome regions, felt that resources could better be devoted to securing peace, at whatever cost, for the development of the larger and more stable settlements nearer the towns.

Left to himself, as we have seen, the frontiersman was always in jeopardy, but able sometimes to get in a shrewd blow, and sometimes to recover herds and other property that the natives had stolen.

Such liberty of action, though precarious, was jealously valued by the remoter settlers as their only means of redress against the natives. But as it involved not only the border, but the safety of the whole country behind, it was a liberty of action which few Governments would have delegated. The authorities at the Cape claimed the right of interference and veto in the affairs of the frontier. In the circumstances of the case, unfortunately, such interference, however well-intentioned and promising in theory, was in practice likely to prove irritating and futile, because as it brought no accession of strength to the arms of the unprotected white man, it was likely to hamper more than it helped him. It kept him back on the occasions when, with the enemy outgeneralled, he felt he should pursue his advantage and teach a useful lesson; and it did so without advantage to the pacifists. For as the native had

an insatiable propensity for looting, he looted when he could, and embraced conciliation only on such occasions, and for such periods, as suited him to put that shield between himself and the just and imminent vengeance of the frontiersman.

Therefore, despite the long-standing policy of conciliation, so well-intended and admirable in theory, but so impractical in the then condition of the border, the depredations continued, unrest spread throughout the country, and fainter grew the prospect of goodwill, not only between whites and blacks, but between the authorities and the frontiersmen. And to crown the discontent, that admirable but badly administered Act, the Emancipation of Slaves, was authorised.

In the South Africa of that day, as in the southern parts of the United States and throughout the East, most Europeans, certainly all the upper classes, were slaveholders. In South Africa the slaves, especially those of Asiatic descent, were often highly intelligent and skilled. About the desirability of emancipation there can now be no two opinions, and even at that time many South African slaveholders were enlightened enough to admit and even to urge that desirability. But as emancipation was rightly a national measure, so it was urged, its cost should be a national burden. The compensation ultimately accorded, however, was not only far below the value which the owners set on their slaves, but was made payable only in London, thus giving rise to further irritation.

A MOTOR HIGHWAY IN THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL.

It must in fairness be recalled that the methods by which colonisation is made successful were not as well understood in those days as now. But even in those days it might have been apparent, to any reflecting mind, that this was not the happiest way to affect a very delicate and far-reaching social reform.

The townsman, as well as the frontiersman, soon smarted under a treatment the ineptitude of which galled even more perhaps than the injustice. The settlers felt that the time for a change had come. Large numbers decided to leave what is now Cape Province, and to establish their own rule elsewhere. North of the Orange River the land was practically unoccupied. They decided to go there. The Great Trek, or exodus—probably the most dramatic incident in the history of South Africa—commenced in 1836, gained impetus, continued for some years, and drained the Cape—which already was but sparsely populated—of thousands of people. And this movement, as it appealed not only to the habitual rover and adventurer, but also to men of culture whose motive was an ethical one, attracted people of many types and of many nationalities besides Dutch. The *Voortrekkers* differed from the Trek Boers in that they included not only many of the best families in the country, but representatives of nearly all the leading nations of the world.

Like the chosen people of old, the *Voortrekkers* " wandered northward from their homes," a somewhat cosmopolitan band at the start, with great

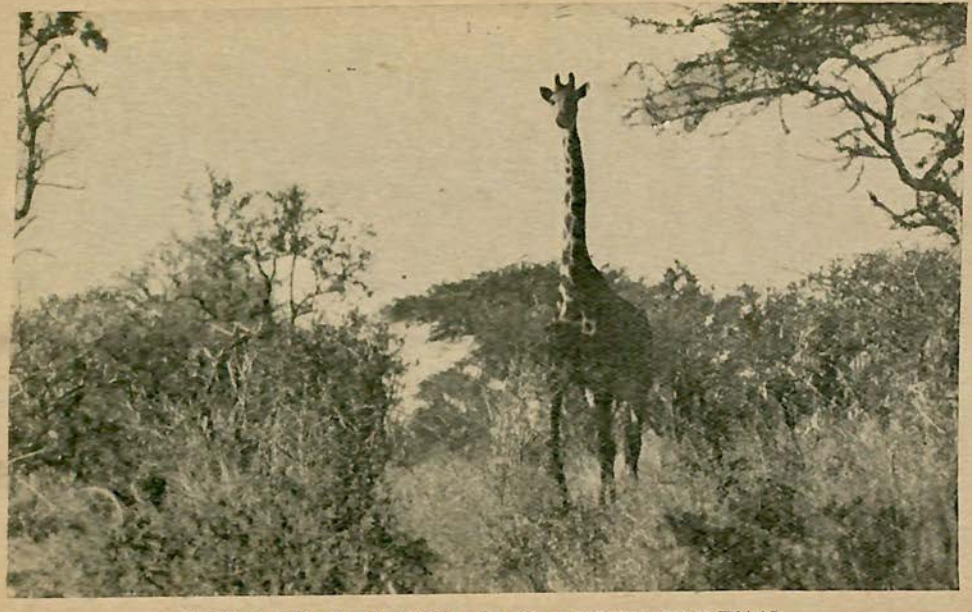
variety of trait and tradition, but a people united in aim, and in time united in speech and blood. And as months passed into years, and the old ties and conditions behind receded farther and farther, so gradually the *Voortrekkers* changed their habits and outlook in conformity with their changed condition. Being beyond the reach of booksellers, newspapers, and outside gossip, the Bible became almost their only literature and their main medium of instruction. It became the object of their assiduous study, and their guide in the management of affairs. So that when they again came in contact with international politics, they had grown into a people who in many respects stood closer to the Biblical world than to the world they had left.

It was a very natural development, for they found in their Bibles not only the antidote against the despair which often must have dogged their wanderings, but also precepts that with singular felicity suited their hourly and even mundane needs. Indeed, the analogies to be drawn, especially from the Old Testament, fitted exactly not only their situation, temper, and the patriarchal mode of life which they adopted, but also the physical features and climate of the land into which they passed. When they reached what now is the Free State, there, as once before in the history of a wandering people, was the wilderness between them and neighbouring civilised peoples; there was also the Ethiopian, who harried the stragglers; there was the lofty steppe-plateau

with a rainfall which also began in November and ended about April, like the "former rains" of the Old Testament; and even in winter a sunniness like that of the Holy Land. The characteristic hills and foliage of the Karoo, through which they passed, resembled exactly the vicinity of Mount Sinai; the Drakensberg, looming in the distance, might have been Lebanon; the grassy plains, beneath the bright African stars, suggested those other plains where "shepherds watched their flocks by night."

Perhaps the analogy struck them. Anyway it was fitting that when they named their villages they gave a number of them Biblical names—as Bethal, Bethulie, Bethesda, and Bethlehem.

After some notable skirmishes with the natives, in one of which the Zulus were routed, the *Voortrekkers* established Winburg as their seat of government in the Free State. And as more and more immigrants came from the Cape, numbers passed farther north across the Vaal to the Transvaal. The pleasant town of Potchefstroom was established before Pretoria, and for a time was the seat of government. But in 1864 the scattered bands united, and declared the Transvaal a republic, with Pretoria as the capital; but they did this only after much dissension among themselves, for the habit of dissenting, and the causes of dissent, had by no means been left behind when they passed from British rule.



IN THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK, EASTERN TRANSVAAL.

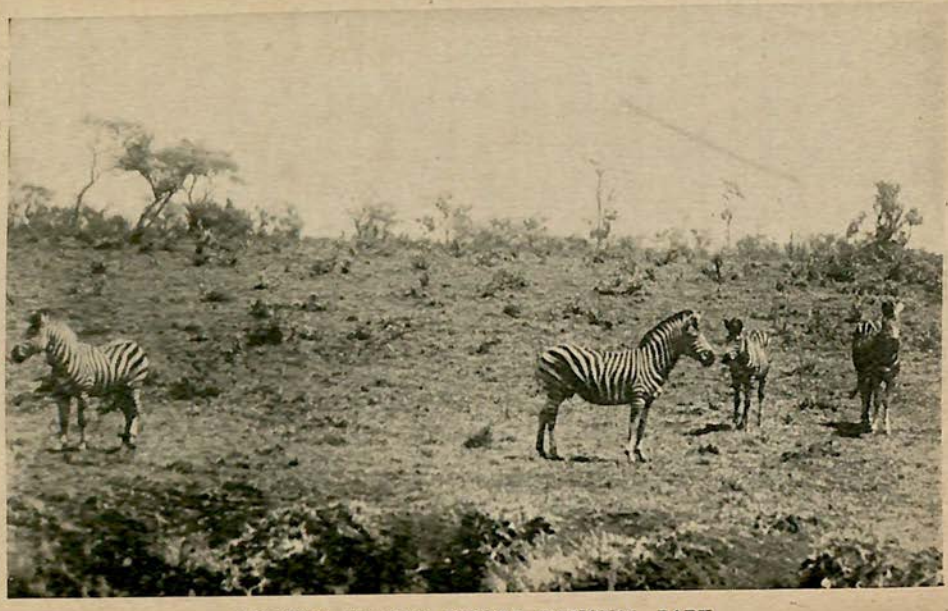
CHAPTER X.

THE OLD TRANSVAAL.

Nations, like men, have their infancy.
—BOLINGBROKE.

THUS arose the two South African Republics. The troubles of the immigrants were, however, not over when they founded the Transvaal Republic and made Pretoria its capital. They were now under their own rule, could shape policy to their heart's desire; but there was little on which to shape a policy. Independence they had indeed, but independence, though precious, will not alone support the wants of life; and, unfortunately, the new Republic lacked the material assets and neighbourly exchanges so necessary for developing a country. Minerals, both precious and base, the Republic had in abundance, and the farming prospects were good. But the minerals had not yet been exploited, and in the absence of railways and trade connections with the outer world, few markets for produce were accessible.

Farming was ostensibly the business of the people, and catering for the social, religious, and political needs of the farmers was the business of Pretoria. But though all held farms, there was little farming, demand for produce being low; and as there was little production there was little wealth, either for those public works which embellish a State, or for those domestic comforts which tend to refine a people.



DENIZENS OF THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK.

The fare of the Boer was as a rule plentiful, but being restricted mainly to what he shot or grew, it was little varied. His wardrobe was, through necessity, more serviceable than elegant. His house and its fittings were plain in the extreme. Even the President lived in a cottage. We do not urge that a President should not live in a cottage. Manius Curius, the great Roman, after subduing the most warlike nations, and driving even Pyrrhus out of Italy, was content with a small farm and a few simple rooms, when he might have lived in Roman splendour. And this no doubt entitles Curius to our increased respect. But many, judging only by externals, mistook him for a working farmer, when really he was the man of his day.

Something of the kind happened to the early Boers. Their simple way of living and their informal manners led to misapprehension. Coming little in contact with the outer world, except through its traders and speculators, and by these being too often superficially judged, the Boer of that day was on occasion caricatured, for his alleged cunning or for his ignorance, generally according to whether he got the better or the worse of a deal. Culture in its higher manifestation they may have lacked, but they did have aptitude, experience, and intuition of quite a remarkable kind. Few books but the Bible were read, and that more and more laboriously as the children of the *Voortrekkers* grew up with the few educational facilities the scattered farms

afforded. But the book of Nature lay open before them, and in it their practised eyes read more than many find in libraries. Confronted always with the sterner realities of life—frontier warfare, drought, flood, fire, pestilence—yet combating these successfully, and in the end emerging triumphant, the character of the early Boers was formed in a hard school that knew little of finesse, but that did inculcate such qualities as strength of body, courage of heart, and balance of mind.

Despite their unostentatious ways and simple wants, such a people cannot be considered peasants, any more than Abraham Lincoln was really a peasant. Given the need, they were able always to produce a Potgieter, Retief, Joubert; a Kruger, Brand, Hofmeyr, Botha, or Steyn; public men all of them who were remarkable enough to attract respectful international attention.

Such then were the *Voortrekkers* and their early descendants, the advance guard of civilisation in South Africa, who bore the heaviest brunt in preparing the country for European settlement.

Thus in the factors that develop a nation, the Transvaal Republic, when newly formed, was well off, but of negotiable wealth it was short, and it became increasingly necessary to find new means of support. There was in particular one occupation for which the country gave scope and the people had a peculiar talent. That was big-game hunting. Many of them, therefore, took up hunting as a trade.

It was a grim life of danger and of suffering. Claw, fever, or assegai threatened at every turn. Yet though the hunter ran curious risks, he was not obsessed by the fact; though he was cut off from his kind for long periods, he was far from lonely. South Africa was then extraordinarily rich in fauna of all kinds, a sportsman's paradise. The veld was thronged with large and small game, and so full of interest, to the discerning, that often it weaned its votaries from other occupations, and hunting became an occupation, often a profitable one. The need for white companionship and communion, so outstanding a feature of modern life, was after a while little felt in the wilds. Speech fell into abeyance, gesture with brow or shoulder or hand largely took its place.

There in time grew up a body of strangely reticent men, not morose or stupid, but, from long contact with Nature, lacking expressiveness; men accustomed to action rather than speech; in fact, what Service calls—

> The nameless men who nameless rivers travel,
> And in strange valleys greet strange deaths alone.

The quantity of ivory, skins, and horns secured before the teeming wild life of South Africa nearly vanished, and before scarcity and Government restrictions made hunting unprofitable, was enormous. These trophies, in the 'sixties and 'seventies, were the main Transvaal products that would bear the cost of transportation. They were therefore practically the only exports from the young Republic, being dispatched by ox-wagon to

A CASCADE AT WATERVAL BOVEN, EASTERN TRANSVAAL.

the coast, and then distributed to the world for the adornment of premises oversea. And in return, the Transvaalers received trade commodities.

Thus arose that characteristic South African institution, conveyance by ox-wagon. What the camel caravan was to the development of North Africa, and the canoe to Canada in the early days, the straggling ox-teams and great tent-wagons were to South Africa before the railway; and the cohorts of the transport-riders boasted many a picturesque personality.

Their life was often humdrum, and generally arduous: humdrum when, loads being heavy, travelling was at the slowest ox-pace; arduous when fly or tick weakened or reduced the team, or when heavy rains turned into quagmires the tracks that served as roads. At such times the ponderous wagons sank to the bed planks, and every few yards had to be dug out and buoyed with logs; and the willing oxen, bred in some quiet pasture, struggled till they sank, worn-out or broken-hearted. Nights of sleeplessness and worry for the transport-riders followed long days of toil and suffering; and after weeks of this, when the journey was at last at an end, when one by one the bulk of the team had perished, or loads had been damaged by flood or jettisoned in quagmires, it not infrequently happened that the transport-rider found himself ruined, travelling back, maybe on foot, to start all over again.

As an offset there was also much of the picturesque, and sometimes even considerable gain, especially in the 'eighties, the great days of the gold boom, when all stores and machinery had to be carried inland hundreds of miles by ox-wagon.

Before mid-day the transport-riders would outspan, if water and grass permitted; often, as on the Karoo, beside a stagnant pool, amid desolation. But they travelled far, saw varied scenes, and sometimes, as in the vicinity of Barberton or Marico, the camp was in some fair spot where the river ran swiftly between wooded banks, mountains gave variety to the scene, and the shooting was good. In such surroundings there was much charm about the restful halt, especially when a light shower refreshed the air and brought the antelopes feeding down the forest glades. Life for the transport-rider was bright at times. It was good to idle a while, beside the wild clematis, when the eastern horizon reddened, and the smoky orange of sunrise lit the arboreal beauty of the kloofs, and heaven mixed its pigments and tinted all the hills, softening yet strengthening their outlines. Then the oxen would stand yoked, and it was time to go.

By the next dawn, a dozen contingencies might have arisen. Lions might have been fought off. A rampant rhinoceros, running amok, might have charged the camp. Veld fires, by their smoke judged to be distant, might unexpectedly have swept round a hill, threatening swift death, and taxing every energy to ward them off. Or a river,

low and loitering at the ford, might quickly have come down with a roar, making the way impassable.

It is only when occasionally one meets an old pioneer that one realises how great a change has come over South Africa in the last forty years. Modernity has overtaken the Transvaal. Life became tuned to a higher key after gold was discovered in payable quantities at Barberton, and especially when, in 1886, it was discovered in undreamt-of quantities on the Witwatersrand. The development that followed was so romantic, and so rapid, that it has hardly a parallel.

At first Lydenburg, then Barberton, and then with a hundredfold intensity Johannesburg, attracted. People of all kinds came from every corner of the world to the goldfields, and Pretoria, from being a village, began to acquire that influence in the affairs of the whole country which made it the administrative capital when the South African Colonies, and the late Republics, united in 1910.

To-day Pretoria is a town with considerable cultural and architectural pretension. Its public buildings and institutions would grace a European capital, but the main charm of the place is perhaps that, more than in any other important South African town, one catches still something of the atmosphere and tradition of the *Voortrekkers* and of those others who helped to make the country.

THE KRUGER STATUE, PRETORIA.

CHAPTER XI.

PRETORIA.

A stately city nobly planned.
—H.R.H., THE PRINCE OF WALES (1925).

PRETORIA, in the 'sixties, had a European population of only a few hundreds. Each little home was set generally in a tangle of rose-garden and orchard, each householder took his ease under his own fig-tree, and life ambled leisurely, at an agreeable gait.

That is all changed. Pretoria has developed, yet in parts of it one occasionally gets a reminder of the old atmosphere and picturesqueness, as towards Fountains and Waterkloof, where, as in the romantic old transport days, there are still patches of bushveld—that bushveld with its strange fascination, especially in summer, when the wild clematis assumes its softest green and the merula ripens its fruit.

Simple and rustic though those surroundings be, with little of grandeur such as the Victoria Falls or the Drakensberg possess, they still invest the old leisurely life with a charm that is peculiarly alluring when looked back on from these present days. It is a charm keenly felt though hard to describe. Under its influence one learns to judge by new standards, till places, like men, become interesting less for outward show than for what they stand; and thus even certain cottages in Pretoria assume a new interest, at least for South

CHURCH SQUARE, PRETORIA.

Africans—humble but historic cottages, fallen on evil days, their rose-garden gone, their orchards in decay, but once the dwelling of some unpretentious but notable hunter, explorer, fighter, politician, or writer. Jess's cottage, the scene of Sir Rider Haggard's romance, is such a one. But in particular we have in mind a place in Church Street West, a simple tree-shaded bungalow. This, in the days of the Republic, was the Pretoria home of Paul Kruger.

His Honour was an early riser, and little addicted to formality or State trappings. It was his custom, from about five in the morning till breakfast-time, to meditate and take the air on his veranda facing Church Street. There, with coffee-urn and tobacco-jar at elbow, he had an open ear for any one with a grievance or a plan worth discussing, and much that was to have the profoundest effect on South Africa was informally set afoot there in the early morning hours.

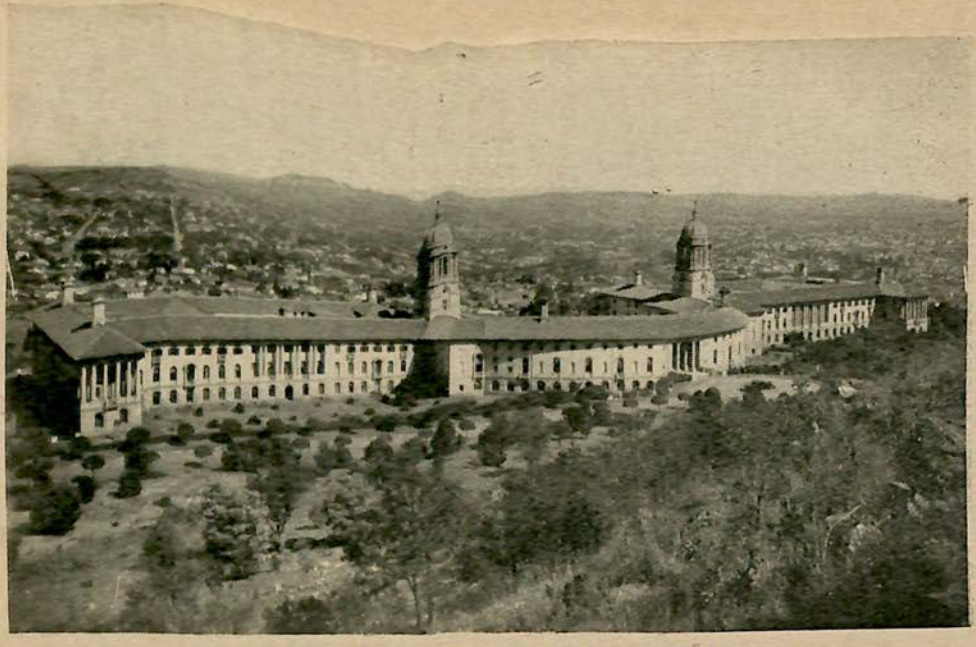
Pretoria to-day is the centre of South African officialdom, where the Governor-General, Ministers of State, and the principal permanent officials reside for most of the year, and where consequently the policy of the country is administered and largely shaped. Indeed, Pretoria, with a population of 85,000, though much smaller than either Durban, Capetown or Johannesburg, in its way exerts on South Africa perhaps as great an influence as any of those places. Pretoria has developed much in recent years. Already, westward, there is a considerable and increasing

THE UNION BUILDING, PRETORIA.

number of factories and workshops. Eastward there are fashionable suburbs, Arcadia, Sunnyside, and Bryntirion, with their fine villas, wide lawns, and roads lined with jacaranda and plane trees; and in the centre is the business area.

The climate of Pretoria is noticeably different from that of Johannesburg, and so is the social atmosphere, though the two places are only forty-five miles apart. Johannesburg, the largest, wealthiest, most cosmopolitan, and socially the gayest town in South Africa, besides being at an altitude thirteen hundred feet higher than Pretoria, is exposed to all the winds of the high veld. Pretoria has been built mainly in a hollow, and is sheltered by low surrounding hills. It has a distinctly southern climate, and a social life tending towards the placid.

Much has been done in recent years by the landscape gardener and the architect to beautify Pretoria. Its zoological garden is a place of striking sylvan beauty. An interesting and educative national museum has been well advanced. Of the several parks, one at least is wholly delightful. And in the centre of the town Church Square commands attention. The red soil of this Square has been covered with lawns and surrounded by a granite balustrade of classic design and majestic proportions, with pylons at the four entrances—the whole giving a good architectural effect, flanked as the Square is by such effective structures as the Law Courts, Provincial Government Building, and the Post Office.

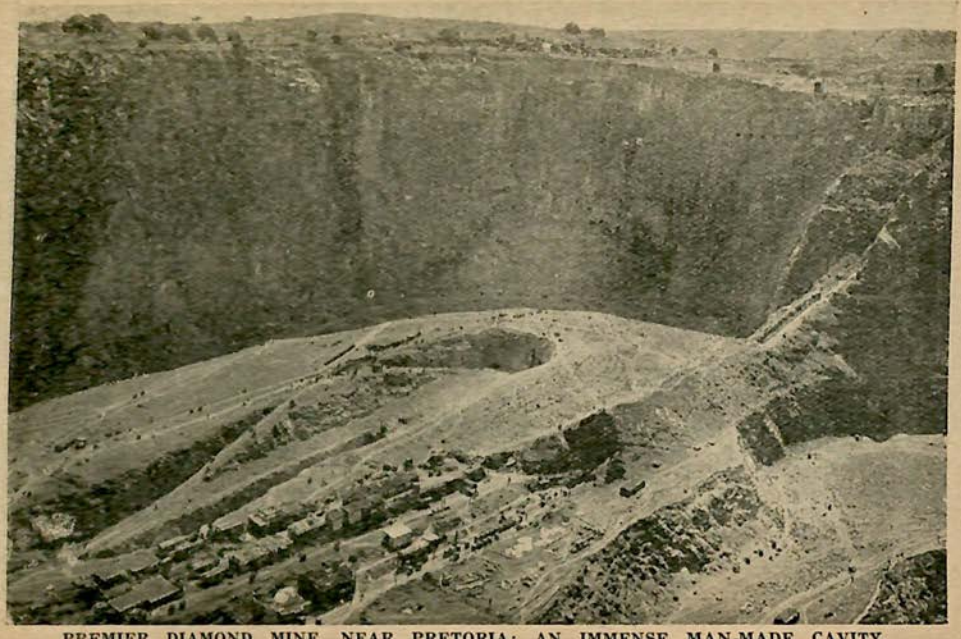


THE UNION BUILDING AND PRETORIA FROM MEINTJES KOP.

But even if Pretoria had nothing else to be commended for, it would still be worth visiting to see the Union Building. It is as noble an edifice as will be found in the Southern Hemisphere; and to South Africans it is especially a heartening spectacle as showing that some of the wealth of the country is at last going into permanent embellishments.

The Union Building has been built in cream and red freestone on a base of local granite. It provides offices for some two thousand officials, and has an auditorium capable, on public occasions, of accommodating about nine thousand people. The building, a little over a mile from Church Square, is commandingly situated on Meintjes Kop, overlooking the town. The charm of the building lies not only in its majestic proportions, but in the variety of artistic effects contrived. The many pavilions, loggias, and stately columned courtyards with fountains playing, have an Alhambra-like effect, heightened by the surrounding terraces, lawns, gardens, and woods; a noble structure in a pleasant setting.

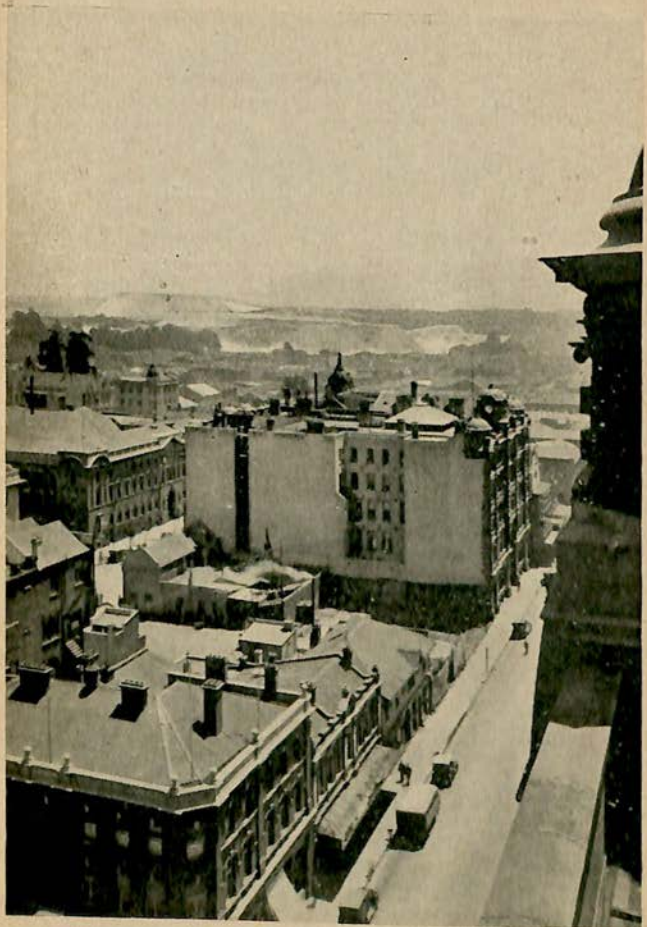
Even this accommodation has already been outgrown by the country's increasing business. Pretoria is therefore still expanding, and in a decade or two should be a large and beautiful town. It has a future full of promise, for apart from its official and educational eminence, it is becoming increasingly important industrially. Its immediate hinterland is a remarkable one, rich in minerals, especially coal and iron, and



PREMIER DIAMOND MINE, NEAR PRETORIA: AN IMMENSE MAN-MADE CAVITY.

even richer in agricultural possibilities. Blast furnaces for the production of iron have already been established in the vicinity of the town, and will probably lead to the development of a considerable steel industry in the vicinity, just as the Premier Mine, thirty miles from Pretoria, started from small beginnings, is to-day the largest of open-worked diamond mines. The largest white diamond ever known was found in this mine. This was the "Cullinan," which weighed 1¾ lb. and measured 2½ in. x 2 in. x 4 in. It now forms part of the British Crown Jewels.

In the adjoining districts of Rustenburg, Lichtenburg, Waterberg and Zoutpansberg, citrus, tobacco, cotton, wheat, and general field crops are already being widely grown, and will in time be produced on a great scale as more land is cultivated; and, in the remoter areas of those districts, hundreds of square miles of excellent ranching land is being gradually stocked for beef production.



MINE DUMPS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY.

CHAPTER XII.

JOHANNESBURG.

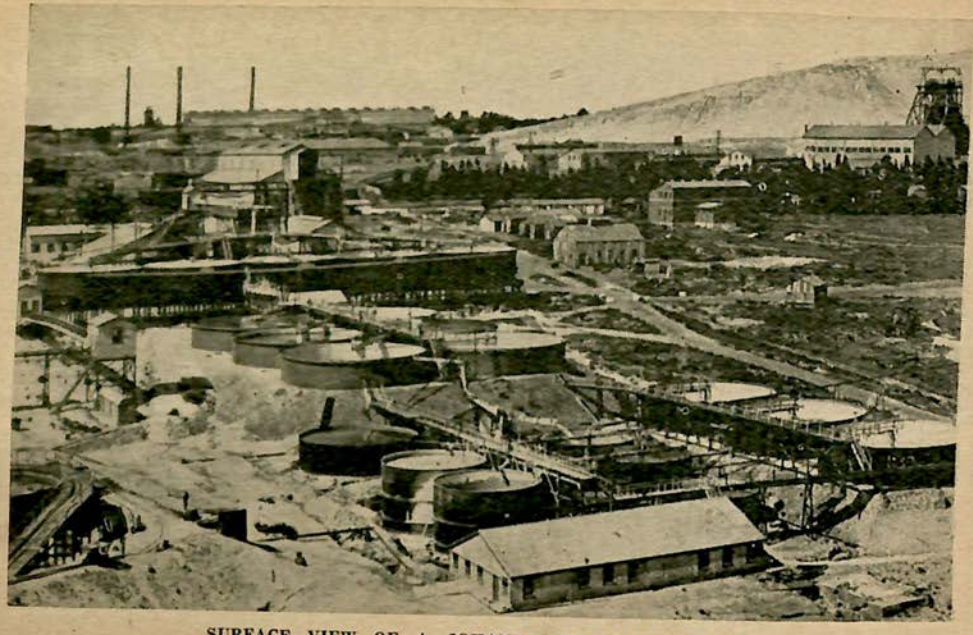
Men have a touchstone whereby to try gold;
But gold is the touchstone whereby to try men.

—FULLER.

SOUTH AFRICA, in some distant epoch, was considerably disturbed geologically. Portions of the granite floor on which it rests were burst asunder; and, in the upheaval, huge sections were turned on end, and forced upwards, to form in places those curiously shaped sloping mountains one sees when leaving the Cape, while in other places the sections of inverted floor, though also of mountainous size, are in the main still buried, and only just perceptibly crop out of the upper soil.

On a plateau, nearly six thousand feet above sea-level, and forming the summit of the watershed between the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, there is such an outcrop. This is the world-famed Witwatersrand, or "ridge of sparkling waters."

That ridge, or rand, is famous, not for its white waters, but for its gold. For by a happy chance there runs through it veins composed of quartz pebbles and silicious cement. These veins dip to the south for several thousands of feet below the surface. They have a thickness varying from a few inches to twenty feet, and extend through the rock, practically unbroken, for, over sixty miles, like golden threads carelessly drawn.



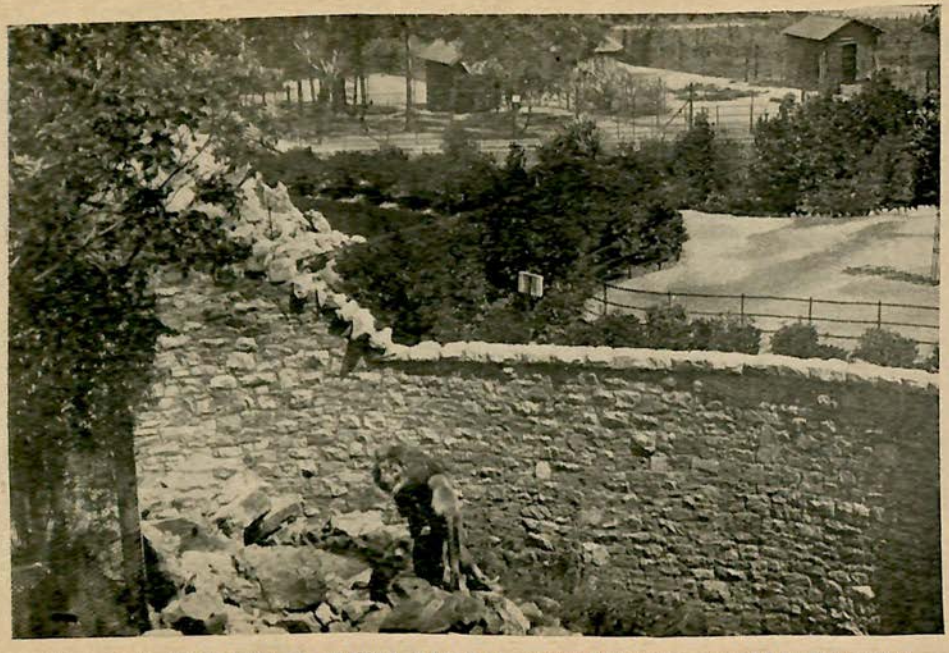
SURFACE VIEW OF A JOHANNESBURG GOLD MINE.

This is the greatest gold deposit known, from which at present well over half the world's annual gold supply is produced; the once mythical El Dorado, for which through the ages men searched all lands, discovered at last in modern times in the Transvaal.

To reach these golden veins, shafts were sunk, and thus for sixty miles there is a string of gold mines, in the centre of which is Johannesburg.

Just as this El Dorado of real life, when discovered, proved to be in a locality quite different from any suspected in the old days, so the manner of recovering the gold is in practice quite different from what the old treasure hunters assumed it would be. The gold is there in an abundance greater even than the wildest fabulist dreamt of, but in a form never imagined by romance. The gold-impregnated conglomerate of quartz pebbles and silicious cement is on the whole of low grade. As a rule, a trifle less than one particle of gold is won from every hundred thousand particles of rock handled. And the gold is in such fine particles and so closely incorporated with the matrix as to be invisible to the naked eye.

This means that, to get an ounce of pure gold over three and a half tons of rock must be blasted, hoisted to the surface, crushed to powder, and thereafter variously treated with chemicals. In 1926, the average cost of this was 19s. per ton of ore milled. At estimated value the gold recovered was worth 27s. 9d., so that the average working profit was 8s. 9d. per ton of ore treated.



THE KING OF BEASTS IN ALMOST NATURAL SURROUNDINGS: JOHANNESBURG ZOO.

Some mines make a larger, some a smaller profit. In either case there is little margin for waste, though great danger of it, as the gold is in such an elusive form that it might easily escape extraction.

Upon the dexterity with which this is prevented, practically the whole success of the venture depends; and Witwatersrand gold mining has therefore developed into so exact a science that the particles of gold are now so successfully extracted that less than four per cent. is lost.

At one time such a high extraction was considered impossible. No methods were then known by which more than about half the gold in the rock could be recovered, and to have handled the lower-grade ore in the deeper mines, now so successfully worked, would have cost more than it was worth.

Those who predicted for Johannesburg a golden future of long duration were therefore generally ridiculed. The gold was admittedly there, but so securely stowed away by Nature that it seemed impossible for man to remove it profitably. But by degrees the problem was solved, with a thoroughness that exceeded the utmost expectations of even the optimists. And like the solution of many great problems, it took some of the best brains to discover it. The method of ore treatment is worthy of a brief description.

In mining the gold-bearing veins, a certain amount of waste rock is inevitably also broken by blasting. Some of this waste is sorted out

underground and built into packs to support the mine workings, but that which cannot be so disposed of is hoisted to the surface, where it is sorted out.

The ore, after preliminary crushing in rotary or jaw crushers, is sent to the mills, where by means of stamps and tube-mills (in some recent plants by means of tube-mills and crushers only) it is reduced in water, or in some cases in cyanide solution, to a fine pulp. The pulp which has been crushed in cyanide solution is sent direct to the cyanide treatment vats, but that which has been crushed in water is made to flow thinly over tables covered with corduroy. The free gold which has been released from its matrix in the process of milling settles on the corduroy, from which it is periodically removed, together with the gold concentrates and sand adhering thereto, which are passed on for treatment on concentrating tables. The gold and concentrates from these tables are then ground in amalgam barrels with mercury, being finally pressed, and heated in a retort, when the mercury is distilled and the gold remains. The pulp which has been sent to the cyanide vats, is treated with cyanide solutions which dissolve the gold and are then brought into contact with zinc shavings or dust, to which the gold adheres. The zinc is ultimately treated with sulphuric acid, and the resultant slime, which contains the gold, is finally filtered, calcined, and smelted. In all there is thus recovered over 96 per cent. of the gold which originally the rock contained.

The gold as it leaves the mines is not of uniform quality or purity, and therefore not in what might be termed a marketable form. To make it acceptable to the gold consumers of the world it is sent to the Rand Refinery, at Germiston, the largest gold refinery in the world; here after treatment it is cast into ingots for shipment.

As over two million tons of rock a month go through these processes on the Witwatersrand, the accumulation of powdered rock, after it has been chemically treated, is an enormous one; hence the so-called cyanide dumps, white hills, like mounds of damaged flour, which abut on Johannesburg and extend for thirty miles on each side.

From the pulverised rock of which these dumps are formed, gold to the value of over nine hundred and twenty million pounds sterling has been taken. They are the talismans which in forty years have transformed an uninhabited, naked, and not particularly prepossessing piece of veld into the largest and wealthiest town in South Africa—a town with a well-built area of eighty-one square miles, containing more than eight hundred miles of streets and a population of over three hundred thousand.

But if Johannesburg owes its fortunes to the cyanide dumps, it also owes them a grudge. They are the most prominent feature of the landscape, and they are an unlovely feature, surrounded by smoke stacks, galvanised mine buildings, and all the drab paraphernalia of industry.

A SHOPPING THOROUGHFARE IN JOHANNESBURG, METROPOLIS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

The railway runs parallel with this area, so that on arriving the first, and on leaving the last, impression one receives of Johannesburg is through this unfavourable medium.

The mining area is, however, only a part of Johannesburg, and no index to the wealth and even beauty of the other parts. Much though it forces itself on the notice of any one coming to or going from Johannesburg, the mining area by no means overshadows the place as a whole. Indeed, in so large a place, a resident might live for years without having the squalor of the mining area obtruded on him. Just as in Paris one might live, if not unconscious of, yet at least unirritated by, its equally repellent industrial side.

Johannesburg is nine hundred and fifty-seven miles from Capetown, or nearly the same distance that Chicago is from New York. It is one of the few African towns of which at least the name, if not the fame, is known throughout the world.

In the days when the gold-mining industry was in its early growth, with all the uncertainties —the alternate optimism and pessimism attending the development of such an industry—the daily scene on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, "between the chains," was as stirring and almost as interesting, if not as important, to the financial world as a busy day on Wall Street. That is a phase of Johannesburg life which has changed.

Fortunes are no longer made or lost so readily as they were; the investor has replaced the speculator, with the result that the gold-mining industry has become stabilised.

RESIDENCES ON THE STONY HEIGHTS OF THE WITWATERSRAND OUTSIDE JOHANNESBURG.

Besides being the centre of gold-mining, Johannesburg, being the natural clearing-house of a large and rich farming area, has become a town of considerable and growing manufacturing and commercial importance. More and more the country round Johannesburg is being put under cultivation, especially by the smallholder, who, with his market-garden, poultry-farm, orchard, or dairy is transforming what a decade or two ago was treeless veld into an area of great productiveness and considerable sylvan beauty.

The production of meat is going to be one of South Africa's great industries, and with the growth of that industry, packing-houses and more factories for working up hair, horn, fats, and hides, are likely to be started in places like Johannesburg; also factories for turning out maize products.

There are already a considerable number of such enterprises well established, and Johannesburg is therefore as strenuous as ever—it will always be a bustling place; but now it is the worker, the worker with hand and brain, not the gambler, who sets the pace; and from being merely a place of temporary sojourn in which the least possible was spent on permanent convenience, Johannesburg has become the home of a large population—a very well-appointed and in many respects even elegant home. It is to-day a town of considerable wealth and solid comfort.

Eloff Street, the principal thoroughfare, and a radius of about half a mile around its centre, form

AN ASPECT OF THE ZOO, JOHANNESBURG.

an area particularly well-equipped with great and fashionable shops, residential flats, modern hotels, and restaurants. Within that area there are nine theatres and similar places of amusement, half-a-dozen large clubs, and, in fact, general amenities and appointments worthy of any large centre. Farther on are the offices of the mining companies, motor houses, engineering and other firms, and the larger banks—as a rule, spacious modern buildings.

On the outskirts there is the Country Club. The famous Wanderers Sports Ground and Joubert Park lie between the commercial centre and the residential portion of the town, and Auckland Park and Turffontein, Johannesburg's two racecourses, farther out.

The ridges and valleys occupied by Johannesburg lend themselves to picturesque effects in landscape gardening and architecture. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to claim that there are more beautiful gardens in Johannesburg than elsewhere in the Union, and perhaps a greater variety of pleasing styles in architecture.

Johannesburg is subject to occasional frost in winter, but rarely to snowstorms. The cold winds are then trying, aggravated as they are by dust, though not so much as before trees were extensively planted and the roads properly surfaced. But as a set-off against these drawbacks of altitude, there are marked advantages. The winter days are generally sunny, and made doubly delight-

INSPIRING THE FRENZIED WARRIORS: NATIVE PIANOS AT A MINE WAR DANCE.

ful by the sparkling mountain air, an air a little dry perhaps but remarkably exhilarating.

The suburbs in the north and north-east, Melville, Richmond, Westcliffe, Parktown, Houghton, Rosebank, and Orange Grove, to mention only some, are especially delightful, perched as they are on pine-clad ridges, and reaching far down into the valleys. They are so new that the residences have all been built on approved modern lines, which though it affords great diversity of architectural style, ensures a collective excellence and elegance not often found in older places whose designing has been more haphazard. And any suggestion of rawness, such as this lack of age might imply, is counteracted by the nature of the building material used, which quickly mellows, and by the rapidity with which lawns, gardens, and even plantations of trees grow there. It has been truly said that the rose gardens of these Johannesburg suburbs are as delightful as those of the Cape; the lawns as trim and smooth as those which border the Thames; and the plantations of firs, pines and gums as flourishing as though indigenous.

Moreover, unlike the rather flat landscapes around, the northern and eastern outskirts of Johannesburg are diversified by hill and dale. Woods now sweep through the valleys and crest the hills, through gaps in which one gets a glimpse here and there of the great plain of the high veld beyond, in that clear mountain air visible for long distances as it rolls away till lost on the blue horizon or among the distant hills.

TOWN HALL AND GARDENS, DURBAN.

CHAPTER XIII.

DURBAN.

Variety's the very spice of life
That gives it all its flavour.

—COWPER.

DURBAN, which is four hundred and eighty-two miles, or twenty hours, by rail from Johannesburg, abuts on the Indian Ocean. It is the principal winter watering-place of South Africa, and its busiest port.

Passengers to South Africa from Europe have the choice of two routes—the one along the west coast of Africa, for which Capetown is the first landing-place; the other through the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and along the east coast of Africa to Durban.

Round the west coast the voyage takes less time, and is cooler, than that round the east coast. Most of the passenger and mail traffic to South Africa is therefore via the west coast. But the east coast route is the more picturesque. It affords an opportunity for seeing en route the quaint half-Asiatic, half-African coastal towns, and even Kenya, not to mention Egypt and the Mediterranean; and as some of the boats are now specially fitted for tropic travel, this route is becoming deservedly popular.

Those who come this way disembark at Durban. It is not a large town compared with places like say, Bombay, Calcutta, or Marseilles, but it is the most important town on the east coast of

THE ESPLANADE, DURBAN BAY.

Africa, and with its up-to-date equipment of sanitation, electric lighting, railways and tramways, good hotels, clubs, and general paraphernalia of western civilisation, it is the most European place the traveller touches at after leaving Naples.

The sea reaches Durban on two sides. The one side, known as the Ocean Beach, faces the full roll of the Indian Ocean. On the other side the sea runs inland through a very narrow channel, and forms roughly a pear-shaped bay.

Along this bay is by far the most beautiful esplanade in South Africa, a work of considerable art flanked by fine buildings and shaded by palms. For the visitor, however, the Ocean Beach is the main attraction. At Durban, as at the more fashionable resorts along the Mediterranean, the landscape gardener and the architect have brought their art to bear. They have embellished the beach with lawns, terraces, arbours, fountains, ornamental gardens, miniature lakes and a concert hall. Everything has been planned for effect; the large modern hotels in the background, the other places of refreshment and entertainment on the beach, have all been built to fit the harmonious scheme.

In such surroundings, especially during the South African winter, which at Durban is sunny and mild, a fashionable assembly recuperates and enjoys itself—though the recuperation is on the whole perhaps subordinate to the enjoyment.

The fishing is good. From the breakwaters at the head of the bay, the docks and the sandy coves

THE BATHING ENCLOSURE AT DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA'S PREMIER WINTER RESORT.

and rocks, Cape salmon weighing sixty pounds, skate up to ninety pounds, and sharks running up to nine hundred pounds are often taken with rod and line.

Motor-boating is in vogue at Durban, the land-locked bay providing a picturesque course that is safe; yachting, too, has its votaries, there being three yacht clubs, the Royal Natal, Congella, and Point.

The excursions around Durban are interesting. Whether one goes by tram to Umgeni, Musgrave Road, or Stamford Hill, or by motor-car farther afield to Isipingo, Sea View, Illovo, Sarnia, or Amanzimtoti, the keynote is variety—sub-tropical scenery and quaint phases of native and Asiatic life enlivening the way.

Durban Berea, a low-lying range of hills behind the town, is the fashionable residential quarter. It is luxuriantly foliaged, with fine vistas over the Indian Ocean, vivid tropic gardens round the residences, and a brilliant sunshine enlivening all. Gorgeous flowers such as one is accustomed to see only in hot-houses, here grow as lustily as cabbages elsewhere, and with less attention. The native fruits—papaws, guavas, mangoes, granadillas, tangerines, pineapples—are strange to the new-comer, but so fragrant and subtle of flavour that the smell and taste of them long haunt the memory, and when one comes across them again, as centre-pieces on European dinner-tables, they revive happy recollections of sunny Durban.

PHYSICAL ARISTOCRATS: ZULU RICKSHA PULLERS AT DURBAN.

The dominant note of Durban is the glossy greenness of an abundant vegetation. The day is generally a golden day—blue sky, bright sunshine, with just a touch of tropic languor in the air. There may be carnival on the beach; there may be incident enough in the busy streets, but the picture that lives in the mind, is that of the white-sailed yachts gathering for a regatta. They are small unpretentious craft, but picturesque when seen through the faint blue haze of distance.

To the visiting eye, there is about Durban, despite its European ways, more that is foreign than familiar. The streets are modern—the architecture of the buildings, the contents of the smart shops, the occupations and recreations of the city, such as one might find anywhere in Europe. Even the sunshine is much what one expects, but does not always get along the Mediterranean. But the foliage and the Orientals are flamboyant; and robust Zulus, in native garb, add a further fantastic touch to the scene. And though on the hills, where the fashionable residences are, the purr of many motor-cars and the clang of the tram are heard, the note that strikes the fancy is the tinkle of the ricksha bells.

The story of Durban is a brief and simple one: the place has had too few rufflings of fortune to have many annals; but viewing the scene from the Berea, one is reminded of Christmas Day, 1497, when the first European ship to enter those waters passed that way. It was summer, and Natal, idle and waiting for inhabitants, lay in its

THE HARBOUR AT DURBAN.

fullest and loveliest dress. Forests, in which elephant and rhino roamed, stood to the ocean edge; here and there a verdure-clad bluff hung high in the air, its inverted image reflected in the clear lagoon-like sea below. The hills were green, the valleys filled with game, and from wild fruit and innumerable blossoms perfumes—strange but grateful to European nostrils—blew from the lonely strand.

It was a land inviting occupation. The voyagers, however, passed on, but they esteemed it so highly that they troubled to christen it Natal.

These first Europeans sailed under da Gama, and, as mentioned in a previous chapter, went to the Zambesi. But others, hardly less adventurous, followed. Natal was never a port of call for them; it was too far off the highway between Asia and Europe; but between it and the old voyagers there was a sombre association, for they sometimes paid a heavy reckoning, and sometimes paid it on the coast of Natal.

Shipwrecks were plentiful. The historic "Grosvenor," with its gallant band, foundered in the vicinity, one of a long list of ships that found a grave in those seas.

The coast of South Africa, from Capetown to Natal, was the scene of many such tragedies in the early days.

Indeed, until recently there was visible on the sands near the Umzimvubu River a touching memorial of the kind—the mouldering ribs of the great galleon "Sao Joao," which after being

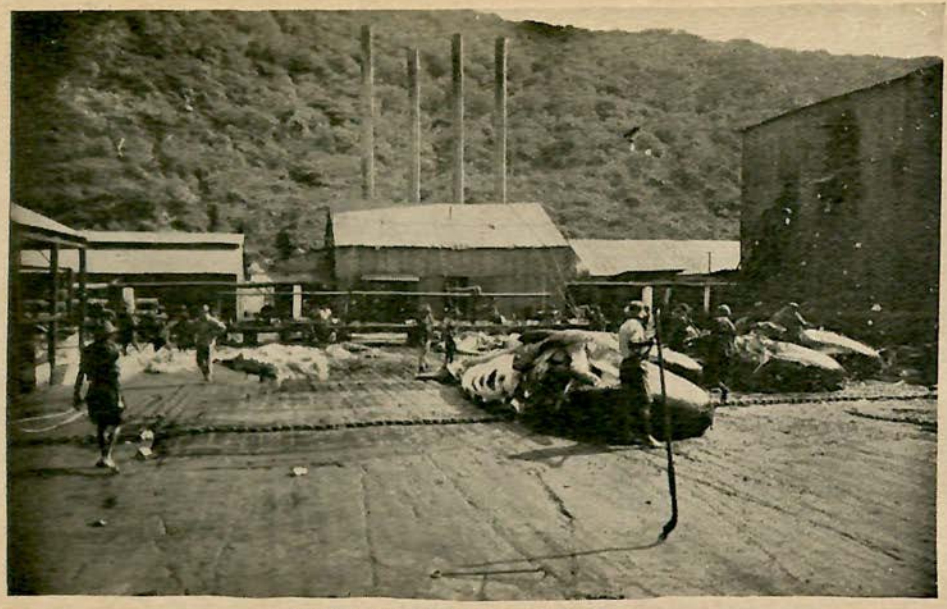
WEST STREET, DURBAN.

buried for generations was disclosed by the drifting of the sands in a gale. And many a mound along that shore maybe covers some other ancient rover or her crew. From the Durban beach, therefore, or from the Berea, the imagination requires little incentive before, like the brave galliots and galleons, it too sails the seas of adventure—sails with the dons and senhors of old, under the great gold and crimson flag, into strange and wondrously fascinating waters.

Except for such occasional shipwrecks, Natal, for over three hundred years after being discovered and christened by da Gama, remained little disturbed save by the natives, who in time came to pasture their cattle there, grow grain, and practise arms. Even in the 'sixties of last century Durban was a pioneer village. For streets it had mainly sandy paths cut through the bush, or trails winding across the dunes. The nearest European neighbour by sea was still several hundred miles away. The descendants of the *Voortrekkers* across the mountains were widely scattered in small bands. And in between were warlike, turbulent tribes.

All that is changed. A considerable traffic with the Transvaal and Free State grew up when these countries developed, and the rich soil of Natal attracted planters of coffee, tea, sugar, and cotton.

The coffee industry was in time abandoned, some think without sufficient reason; cotton is



THE WHALING STATION, DURBAN.

coming into its own again; and a large commerce in coal and merchandise is handled.

But most important of Natal's production is the growing of sugar, and along that coast the reapers and tillers will be seen in sugar plantations that extend for hundreds of miles. Night and day, dimly heard in their sylvan surroundings, the factories crush the cane, filter, condense and crystallize the sap. It is one of the most heartening spectacles in South Africa, this evolution of the wilderness into intense productiveness.

Farther inland there are large wool, cattle and grain farms, and coalfields. These together have combined to develop Durban. It has grown rich, and besides growing important commercially has become a holiday resort, especially popular in winter. For when chill winds blow across the high veld, and inland mountains are capped with snow, and the Cape coast is stormy, the Durban climate is at its best—mildly warm, bright, alluring. So alluring that South Africans in thousands then flock down the great slopes of the inland plateau, from the dry sharp air of the Transvaal and Free State to the moist warmth of the Natal coast, to a climate so sunny and an ocean with a temperature so mild that throughout the winter bathing in the open is a pleasure.

AMANZIMTOTI: A RETREAT ON THE SOUTH COAST OF NATAL.

CHAPTER XIV.

AROUND DURBAN.

A sylvan scene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the sides. . . . .

—DRYDEN.

AS the climate of the Natal coast is sub-tropical, summer in and around Durban is more conducive to languor than effort; it is at times oppressive, yet not without its enjoyable features; especially is this true of the south coast, from Durban to Port Shepstone, where about a score of little rivers are easily accessible by rail.

There on the edge of the sea the jungle lies, sixty miles long and in places a mile wide. And round the lagoons the holiday-makers have set their bungalows, winter hotels have been established, and there is a considerable influx of visitors during the cooler months. But it is questionable whether a visit in summer is not the more interesting. The glaring sands, the quiver of the hot moist air, the brazen sea, may be trying in summer, but the silence and the shadows of the jungle are then most inviting. The fan-palm and the tree-fern throw a twilight of their own, in which faltering sunbeams wander, stencilling little sun-pictures. Sharp shadows lie across the outer paths, the long green corridors are dim, and in that half light of the jungle's heart a great peace reigns. It is a place for relaxation,

THE UMKOMAAS—ONE OF THE MANY RIVERS OF THE COASTAL BELT BELOW DURBAN.

Heavy odours steal from the orchids like a drug; distance-borne and heard as in a dream, the surf booms dully on the bar.

There are no majestic coco-nut palms such as one finds farther up the east coast of Africa, nor are there any lofty, wide-girthed forest giants such as one sometimes sees in Rhodesia. But the palm-like wild banana, the variety and beauty of other trees, the profusion of blossoming climbers, and in summer the ferns and occasional orchids, form a very pleasing combination whose appeal is added to by the quiet lagoons and a Pacific-like surf on a Pacific-like bar.

Such we found Umkomaas. It was a typical south coast summer day. Like an opiate laid on heavy lids, the slumberous sunshine steeped the land.

It was a veritable land of nod. Then the petrol launch commenced to voyage noisily, some one shouted a message from the bank, the echoes carried it loudly abroad, and the spell was broken. A thirsty monkey slid from its bough, the pelican resumed its fishing.

The Umkomaas is not without interest. Certainly it repays one for the trouble of taking the short railway journey from Durban. Anyway, it is a change, something off the beaten track of travel.

It is a shallow tidal river, about half a mile wide at its mouth, and navigable by small boats for about eight miles. It flows between on the one side sugar plantations and banana groves, and

A PALM GROVE IN THE BOTANIC GARDENS, DURBAN.

on the other side picturesque hills and territory reserved for the natives. Suddenly the right bank rises loftily, revealing many trees which in summer stand wrapped in blossoming creepers. There the anvil bird sounds its metallic note, the violet cuckoo glints in the sunshine, and the tiny honey-sucker darts its blue and scarlet head into the fragrant chalice of the moonflower. There, too, the little grey monkeys have their homes, and in neighbourly, not to say meddlesome, fashion make the freest use of adjoining banana groves, little being beneath the notice of their burning inquisitiveness, or beyond the reach of their small grubby hands.

If you sit still enough, first one little black face then another, a third, and finally, perhaps a score, peep from behind the stems, with great stealth, until some flippant fellow upsets a graver friend, when a quarrel ensues, and like shadows they fade away. When all is quiet again they reappear, maybe at the water edge, in spousal couples or whole troops, the females with their young slung round their waists, the males with nothing but their natural levity. And always their behaviour is almost human, whether when waggishly showing off in company, or sitting hunched in solitary meditation, back bent and look of preternatural wisdom on the little wrinkled face. They are especially human when laying siege to each other's hearts, the little male obviously self-conscious, embarrassed, and apparently wishing the business well over; while the winsome one twiddles

A SUGAR CANE FIELD ON THE NATAL COAST.

her toes and peers hard at nothing in the distance, with a fine affectation of indifference.

Farther on is the ford, where signs of human habitation appear; on the one side Indian labourers give a gay splash of colour to the sloping fields of sugar-cane, especially the female workers, whose taste in garments favours yellows, greens, and crimsons; on the other side, an occasional Kafir hut is perched on its own little hill.

The ford is the scene of quite a pedestrian traffic. All day the natives come and go, wrapped only in a loincloth or blanket, making courtesy calls or on shopping bent. Up and down the hills they stalk, taking the heavy slopes without perceptible effort, the men walking lightly as becomes their greater dignity, the women carrying the burdens—buxom women who with as much as eighty pounds on head climb the gradients with swinging strides, chaffing or singing without a catch in the breath.

Then the river narrows, and one reaches the reedy island and finally the glen. By this time the shadows lengthen to the setting sun. In the failing light an occasional roebuck comes to the water to drink, moorhens wheel with low discordant cries, green pigeons seek their roosts, and the fruit-bat sallies forth in the dusk.

Then a huge pink moon swings itself lazily over the horizon. And on the opposite bank a muffled drum, like some prophetic spirit boding ill, throbs its message through the heavy air.

IN ORIENTAL DURBAN: AN INDIAN JEWELLER.

There is something inexpressibly touching in the melancholy, something more moving than melody in the monotony of an Indian tom-tom on such a night in such surroundings. It fits exactly the spirit of the place. Both are remote from modern ways. It is reminiscent of old, old creeds, and musty distant times, as it calls, on its unheeding gods. Yet not altogether unheeding, perhaps, for almost you hear the response, as who should say—

> We be the gods of the East
> Older than all;
> Masters of mourning and feast,
> How shall we fall?

Assiduously at first the muffled drum-beats come, then faintly and more faintly as the Hindu player tires.

They are not without suggestions of the picturesque, these Natal Indians.

From an ethical point of view much may be urged against the admission of Asiatics. Indeed so much has been successfully urged that in South Africa further entry is forbidden. In a country like South Africa, designed by Europeans for Europeans, the man of Asia remains unassimilated, does not easily fit into the scheme of things. But, however objectionable socially and in commercial competition a comparatively low standard of living makes the lower-caste Asiatic, there can be no doubt that from the purely spectacular point of view his presence gives, to those parts of South Africa where they are

numerous, an increased interest. Nothing could be more in harmony with the blue of a southern sky and the green of the sub-tropic vegetation than the glint of the minaret or the cool white arches of some little Jain temple, even if on closer examination they prove to be only cheap plaster affairs; nothing more picturesque in a tangle of bamboo than the rich glow of Asiatic habiliments.

This we felt was so in Natal, where the Indians, like the Malays in the Cape Peninsula, have become a considerable section of the community. They are of many castes, but chiefly artisans and labourers, and many creeds, as they or their ancestors came from all parts of India, and brought with them something of the atmosphere of the places of their origin.

Their life in Natal is in some respects different to what it would be in India. There are no thronged, gossiping, bustling bazaars; no temple-lined holy Ganges, with shrines and sacred waters and worshippers seeking absolution. Hence, perhaps, backsliding. But on the whole they are fairly orthodox, somewhat ceremonial in dietary, and not altogether without punctilio in such matters as the colour of a turban, the placing of a caste-mark, or the lay of a shoulder-cloth.

Many of even the lower castes recite beautiful tenets about predestination, gratitude, justice, truth, and honesty; but, like other poets, do not always practise what they preach. Like the superstitions of the Kafirs, the religions of these Indians are many and diverse; but unlike the

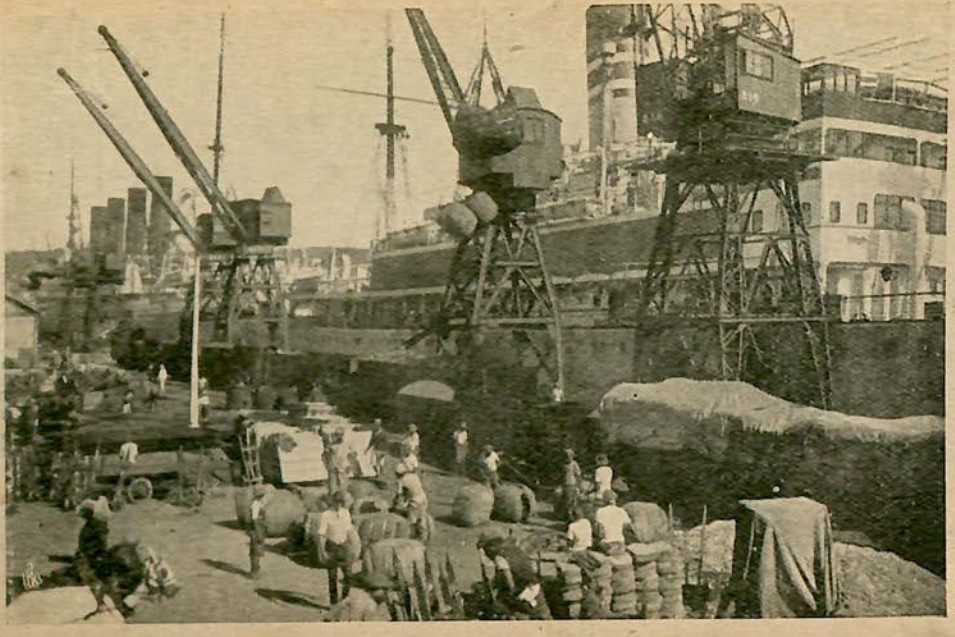
Kafir's lively belief, their salience is quietism, which engenders in the devotees a gentle tolerance that enables them to live on the whole in amity and even charity.

We wandered along the south coast, round little bays, over the lagoons, up the rivers, and through the jungle; among people sometimes quaint, and scenery often beautiful; in a delightful climate.

The charm of the Umkomaas, on one bank at least, is its wild environment, a touch of that somewhat sombre South African primitiveness which, with the advent of civilisation and the plough, is fast disappearing.

The charm of the Umzimkulu River—farther south—is different. It is in places like a forest-topped bend of the Rhine, in other places like a meadow-lined Dutch canal. Anon the scene changes to a glimpse of the East, mystic and solemn where the tall bamboos throw their heavy shadows, and the crane, like a lone grey anchorite, lives in solitude; but gay and flamboyant along the sun-steeped stretches where the humming-birds flit among the narcissi.

Woods sweep up the headlands, and give here and there a peep of a villa loftily perched on a crest. Then round a bend the scene changes. Abruptly the banks lower, and on either side outer hills overtop each other, smooth hills that refresh the eye with the green of sugar-cane, tobacco plantations, and occasional citrus groves. Thereafter for a stretch the river wears the livery of servitude, but a pleasing livery, for the airily



ONE OF THE WHARVES AT DURBAN.

flung suspension bridge spans the waters like a gossamer, wholly in keeping with its environment; and the barges, laden with sugar, their bargemen squatting like huge brown bats, pass softly with a quaintness of their own.

Then to the nostrils comes the scent of orange blossoms and the heavier musk of the mimosa, which latter stand like guardian naiads of some sylvan deity, flinging their incense abroad. Here doves coo throatily, the bulbul has its home, egrets skim through the sedges, and an occasional rose-coloured trogon is seen, and from afar, faint and faultily, the plaintive notes of some Eastern song are borne from the bank where, like Rebecca of old, slim Indian women carry the water-gourd on head.

A ZULU CHIEF SALUTES AT HIS KRAAL DOOR.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NATIVES.

The proper study of mankind is man.

—POPE.

THE north coast of Natal, at least in the vicinity of the railway for about a hundred and seventy miles from Durban, is perhaps not as diversified in interest as the south coast; but it has a very special interest, particularly in Zululand, where native life may be seen, if not unaffected by civilisation, yet at least unspoilt.

Of the five main races—white, yellow, brown, red, and black—into which mankind has been divided, the black race is the product of Africa. It is one of the largest, and in many respects most curious, of the five.

And as of this race there are in the Union of South Africa nearly six millions, in a total population of seven and a half millions, more than passing reference will be not only justified but necessary if the visitor is to have some conception of the various people among whom for a while he will travel; for wherever he goes in South Africa there will be natives, as they are distributed throughout the country, not localised in any part of it; and in choosing Zululand as the site for our narrative, we do so merely for the convenience of focus.

The known history of the South African natives is remarkable neither for antiquity nor for pro-

fusion of reliable detail. It goes back only a few hundred years and has to be substantiated in many essentials. Such as it is, however, it indicates that of the main types of South African natives—Bushmen, Hottentots, and Bantus—the Bushmen and Hottentots first occupied the country, and the Bantus came from the north probably not more than three hundred years ago. They came from central and east Africa to Natal and the Cape Province; and in doing so swept the now almost extinct Bushmen into the mountains and deserts, and the Hottentots—some to the western coastal belt, some into the more virile life of the new-comers, where identity was soon lost by the Hottentots; so that to-day the South African natives are nearly all of Bantu blood. Of these, the Zulus, Basutos, and Fingoes are the tribes to which allusion is mainly made; other tribes are the Swazis, Matabeles, Mashonas, Bechuanas, to mention only some.

Of the natives who live in and around the towns, many have found useful and respectable niches in the European scheme of things as chefs, waiters, porters, coachmen, gardeners, and navvies.

Generally, however, the South African native is a backwoodsman. He may serve a term on a farm or mine, or in a town, but generally shows little trace of the experience after he has resumed life in the native kraal. Most natives, however, never leave home, and know the outer world only by repute. Living thus, the native has affairs supervised and regulated by European magistrates

and officials, but the old tribal customs and influences remain, except those repugnant to the usages of civilisation, and on the whole therefore the native lives much as his forefathers lived. He is not the robust soldier or skilled hunter, not the man of practical resource and great endurance his ancestor was. He is, however, less a brawler and swashbuckler. Though generally too undisciplined to endure daily toil all the year round, he is on the whole more industrious and better living than of old. In many respects he is a likeable fellow, presenting ludicrous limitations no doubt, but generally superb of limb and especially out of towns, not without dignity of bearing.

His character is an impulsive one, amenable less to reason than to fear, guided less by a regard for right or wrong than by respect for expediency.

He has his moments, and is then often just and courteous, stoical, and even heroic when facing dangers he knows. His disposition is often a kindly and hospitable one. If he is not strong in truth for its own sake, it is largely because in his figurative speech and mind fact and fancy are not rigidly distinguished, especially when, in the face of custom and the dictates of nature, to be over scrupulous about statements of fact may be neither expedient nor profitable.

These, of course, are the qualities of the immature, rather than of the untrained, brain of a child; and the South African native has this in common with children—his observation is good,

ZULU SNUFF GRINDERS.

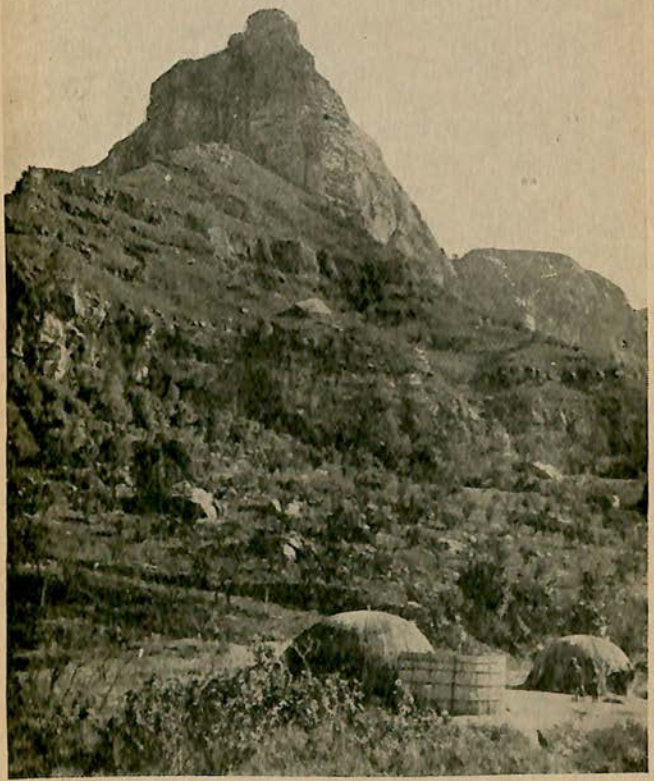
his memory retentive, his power of detecting idiosyncrasy and mimicking it, keen to a fault. Also, he is generally unable to reason logically, and lack of contemplation sends him frivolously along the line of least resistance.

These are limitations which have left the average South African native on a low plane socially. Unlike any other important race, not excepting even the American Indians who under Montezuma enjoyed a considerable civilisation, the South African natives have advanced little beyond the rudimentary. As they were away back in the dawn of history, so in the main do they still appear. Other races have risen or fallen. The natives of Africa appear the only large race which has stood still.

Is this the result of poor opportunity or insuperable defect? Given the proper opportunity, can the native develop? A few—Dingiswayo, Chaka, Moshesh—were notable generals, statesmen and even philosophers; but with them it was a matter not of opportunity but of merit. Each rose unaided. Each rose superior to his opportunities, not through them.

Such cases are so abnormal as to be no criterion; and though in the present generation there are some highly educated, one might say highly cultured, natives, the effect of such education on the native character and the influence of character so formed has still to be proved.

On the whole, therefore, the native's capacity is an unknown quantity. It is still uncertain how and in what direction he can best be developed.



A ZULU KRAAL IN THE MOUNTAINS.

The present is a period of transition. Education, rather experimental education, is being extended to the natives. They have in places their own Press, their native teachers of European learning, their own Christian ministers, their own carpenters, masons, bootmakers, tailors, printers, and even a few graduates in law and medicine.

But when the average native returns to the ancestral kraal there is a tendency to slide back to the blanket and the care-free ways of the kraal, perhaps because the backwoodsmen still form the bulk of the race and its most virile section; and the backwoodsman, especially of the old regime, has little patience or respect for innovation. He is still a pagan at heart, loving merriment and good living, looking on a man as a man and woman as woman, with no impulse for the higher thought.

In his hot pagan heart there are many likeable qualities, in his bearing there is often dignity, in his downright ideas, characterised though they are by extreme simplicity, there is much that is quaint and interesting. The Zulu language especially lends itself to this. It is strikingly euphonious, with a copious and flexible vocabulary; a language which often polishes and refines even a poor thought and gives to the utterance of the better-class Zulu touches of poetry. But the white man's language penetrates everywhere, and English and Dutch trade and industrial terms are now current even in Zululand.

Zululand is not exactly a tourist resort, but in places has undoubted beauty, and we found the trip, partly by rail and partly on horseback, extremely interesting. The scenes were pleasant, the people unusual.

In and out, the dusty path which we followed wound snake-like, now dipping to a gully, anon passing through a mango grove, where the Sykes monkeys sleep through the long hot hours or walk in procession through the steaming air.

Sometimes a flamingo flashed to the lakes beyond, sometimes a hare or antelope streaked from its lair.

Perched on the hills were the little thatched huts of the Zulus, hills sometimes separating a dwelling from its neighbour, always separating the kraals.

It is a patriarchal land in these native reserves, where each man receives for tillage such soil as his needs suggest, living in solitary estate on his own little hill or as a unit of the more clannish life of the many kraals.

As far as is consistent with humaneness, old native customs and laws prevail, modified and supervised by the Union Government only to the extent necessary to prevent tribal and village feuds, cattle-raiding, and crime generally. Authority centres in the head of each family, next in the headman of the locality, then in the hereditary tribal chief, assisted by his *indunas* or counsellors, and finally in the paramount Union Government, the Zulu king having been deposed for the peace of the country.

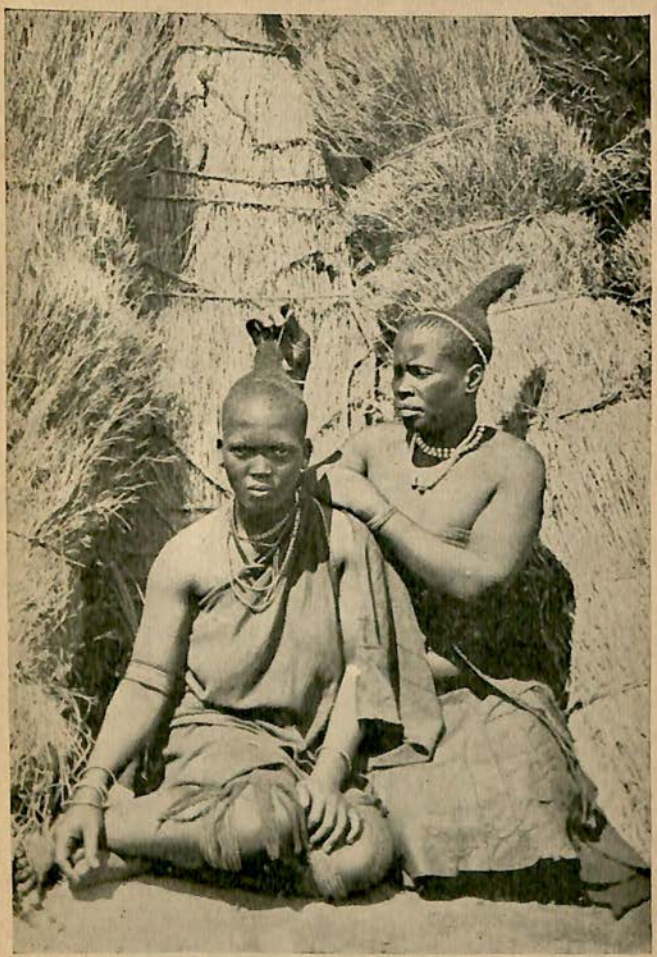
It is an arrangement comprehensive in its regard for civil rights, and secures to the native a code of morals and ethics adequate to his present needs, and a degree of peace and prosperity seldom known under the old regime.

The result is an unusually happy people. There are, of course, exceptional natives, whose early days under a native king were spent in bloodletting and rousing predatory excursions; tottering old veterans, these, whose fast-fading minds now glimmer only at the thought of war and "the good old days."

Mentally, but by no means physically, the women are generally inferior to the men. But again there are exceptions, and one sometimes comes across a self-assertive old dame accustomed to rule her husband, his other wives, all relatives within reach, and even the kraal as an oracle or caster of nativities.

It was the affliction of the first headman we met to have such an one amongst his plurality of wives, who, mistaking us perhaps for the periodical tax-gatherer, frankly presaged from our visit nothing but evil for the tribe.

In front of her hut she sat, reviewing the simple annals of the kraal. Nobody was exempt, and quips and grim jests were hurled with great freedom, over great distances, at passing pedestrians. In fact, delicacy was not the foible of her mind. Her pleasantries were downright, even in allusions to the most intimate affairs of passing village maids and matrons. Her costume was scant and



A ZULU DAMSEL'S BRIDAL COIFFURE.

malodorous, her manner peremptory, but when in the mood she was well worth listening to on matters of current politics.

"Gone," she explained in reminiscent vein, "are the mighty days when, did the rains hold off or sickness come, the diviners saw and told who wrought the evil, so that some one suffered greatly.

"But now the law forbids this. The law! And what does the law but pry, hampering men and working evil with this tax and that tax, seeking always peace and money, money and peace? And to what end? See how the people toil. And what avails it? The cattle kraals are empty, the crops grow scant. But in the days of long ago, when no true Zulu worked, if aught were wanted, we need but cross the border and find it there. Cattle in plenty! Corn ready ground! Women for barter and toil.

"What matter that the weak were slain and that for miles the Fingo smeared the face with ashes? What matter, so that we the victors lay fully fed! Wow! Those were the days when kings were truly kings, eating whole tribes at will; and men were very bulls, prancing with ill-pent vigour. While now, *Inkos*, behold the men!"

Sometimes our company was different. Once, stalking superbly along with great driving strides, a ringed *induna* came, club and shield in hand. His snuff-box dangled in the lobe of one ear, his snuff-spoon in the other. A stalwart Philistine of haughty mien, wrapped in a worn kaross and true African dignity. And behind him came his three lithe wives, padding soft-footed in Indian file.

Their possessions, excluding live stock, were worth perhaps ten shillings; but apparently they were content. Theirs is an animal or ideal condition, according to whether we hold with Voltaire that the foundation of the millennium must be enlightenment and reason, or with Jean Jacques Rousseau and primeval simplicity.

Soon the *induna* and his wives were far behind, and we travelled in the quiet of the African countryside. The day was hot, the road long, so we halted at a kraal to water the horses. It was not over clean, but a place to warm the heart of an Arcadian—lazy laughter, song and labour ranking in the order here set down.

At the first blink of dawn we left, and a little way out were nearly unseated by the horses shying at a prostrate witch-doctor, whose sorcery had been publicly overcome on the road by the more potent Kafir beer.

His profession, in a land drenched with the grossest superstition, is a profitable one. The raw native believes and knows not what he believes. Spirits there are, good and bad—especially bad. The woods are full of them. Some even live under water. A few bring rain, but others, and these have the ascendancy, are occupied in keeping it off, in binding the soil, so that hoeing is doubly hard; in tampering with cattle, and in carrying evil between man and man.

If you have an enemy, it is necessary only to invoke one of these spirits against him. Therefore, though in many respects shrewd, the raw

native is spiritually tormented. Tell him that there is a dignity and manly satisfaction in labour, and he sees the fallacy at once. Speak about a benign God whose goodwill reaches to all men, and his interest wanders. But once get started about some new and peculiarly malignant devil, and you have him spellbound, fascinated beyond all thought of time or reason.

Hence the Zulu gods or spirits are many, and the witch-doctor juggles with them all, and though witchcraft is prohibited by law, does a brisk trade in charms for curing impotency in field or stock, compounds love-philtres for destroying opposition in young women coveted by aged polygamists; and with great dexterity manipulates certain bones, which when cast permit omens to be deduced from the fantastic dreams and visions that on hot nights beset overfed people.

The witch-doctor—that helpless vehicle of a sorcery more downright than his own—slept on as we passed. It was a perfect day, such as one seldom meets with out of Africa. Later it would be burning hot, but now in the dawn the land lay fresh and fragrant.

With the sun came life. Householders on little hill-tops stretched themselves, smoke curled from a hundred fires, and when the dew had been quickly sucked up by the rich sunshine, the cattle were turned out to graze. The herders are usually youths, but two we came across were anything but that. They were bags of merely skin and bone, pitiable in their extreme old age and general

THE ZULU: IN SAVAGE ARRAY.

emaciation. So we gave them food and added some tobacco.

"Behold a feast! Lo, it is meat!" the elder crony admitted, rubbing a slim and leathery stomach. One by one, with the hesitancy of full enjoyment, the tinned sausages were dispatched, with many a guttural "Wow!" And when the last scrap had been licked from fingers and tin, and any remnant of grease had been carefully rubbed on scant beards, pipes were lit. The strong tobacco heartened the courage of the veterans, reserve thawed, and they talked with us a while, like men of the world, "meat-fed" men, as the elder explained.

Merry fellows and shrewd withal, they proved, with many a jest and many a sage saw well pointed.

"Leave now my soul in further peace, my father, and deign another fill," and the old and trembling hand held out the still warm pipe.

Under its relit influence his tongue was further loosened, and he told of the good old days and many wars, speaking as a slayer of men. It was a tale in which victory and women, cattle and blood, strove each for ascendancy; a tale of stirring times, when he "pillaged and gave to the sword," none chiding. But the tale was long, the day was growing hot, so we took our departure.

He had, however, been right. Times were stirring in the South Africa of his youth.

Properly to appreciate what at that time the native, without outside help or suggestion, attained

ZULU WAR-DANCERS.

to, it is necessary to hark back. At one time there lived the chief of one of the many clans then occupying part of what is now called Zululand. He had two sons, Tana and Godongwana.

Their temperaments fitted them for something more hazardous than the pastoral life of Zululand in times of peace; their ambitions were towards empire and deeds of derring-do. They plotted the murder of the old chief, in order that, as his probable heirs, they might arrange matters more to a warrior's liking. The plot miscarried. Tana was killed. Godongwana, badly wounded, managed only just to escape. For some fifteen years nothing was heard of him; the old chief died, a successor took his place.

Then happened an event, trifling in itself, but destined to affect the whole of Kafirdom profoundly. From afar, in that rapid and mysterious way news travels amongst the South African natives, a tale of wonder reached the Zulu kraals. A young chief was approaching, who should say from where? bringing with him two such animals "as no man had previously seen," and "carrying thunder and lightning in his hands." Like Cortes in Mexico, some centuries before, the traveller gained from the wonder his mounts and weapons excited an advantage no power of his own could have compelled; for in Zululand no one had previously seen or heard of a horse, or seen or heard of a fire-arm; and no one could rightly foretell the resource of one who could dabble with such creations.

ZULU WAR DANCE: LINING UP THE FEMALE PARTICIPANTS.

As a god among men, therefore, the horseman advanced by easy stages, little prone, remembering his long and menial exile, to forego an iota of the awe he created, yet letting it be gradually known that though now peculiarly favoured from the spirit world, he was really none other than Godongwana returned. He was proclaimed chief, and assumed the name of Dingiswayo—the Wanderer.

It is believed Dingiswayo's exile had been spent in the vicinity of white men. There his astute mind no doubt found opportunities for appreciating the superiority of an army using fire-arms, properly officered for the maintenance of discipline, divided into regiments and companies for prompt handling, and even in times of peace regularly drilled to maintain efficiency.

He quickly set about shaping an army, the prowess of which soon exceeded anything previously dreamt of in Kafirdom. Thereafter his career was one succession of conquests. But, besides being an able general, he proved a clement conqueror. He conciliated and won over, rather than destroyed or enslaved, those he conquered in battle. Unlike most natives of his age, or of any previous age, he fought not for the lust of fighting, but rather when the interests of his people demanded it, and then fought irresistibly, but not vindictively.

Meanwhile tactics not unlike those of Dingiswayo's own hot-headed early manhood had embroiled the youthful scion of an adjoining tribe, who, about 1805, fled to Dingiswayo for protec-

tion. The stripling joined the renowned army as a cadet, and was destined in time to become its most brilliant and its most terrible leader; a man whose military talents far exceeded those of even Dingiswayo, but whose character lacked the delicate balance, and whose motives were savage. This was Chaka.

He was a natural soldier, and not only quickly imbibed, but in time much improved on all Dingiswayo could teach him. In five years he was a leader of veterans; though not the rightful heir to the chieftainship of his tribe, he succeeded to it through Dingiswayo's influence; eight or ten years later Dingiswayo died.

By a chance accession of tribal strength Chaka, from being a comparatively minor chief, acquired the control of a powerful combination. He made the fullest use of it. War, ruddy beyond any previously known, raged through the land. The battle-field became the practice ground for Chaka's troops. Rapid, numerous, and crushing defeats were inflicted on all pretending to any degree of independence. Probably over a million victims succumbed violently to that terrible reign.

Musing on such a past, when travelling through Zululand, one cannot but marvel that the nation should have survived so well; that scenes that once so turbulent, so full of pain and horror, should have become so happy and peaceful.

It is amidst such rural and peaceful surroundings that Chaka, assassinated at last, lies buried; and around him, spread wide to distant borders,

the million beings over whose lives he stepped to power, moulder and are forgotten.

Yet not quite forgotten. A century has passed, but to the chronic superstition of the native mind much for awe still remains. At dusk, especially, belated men hurry through the shadowy valleys with many a backward glance. All day the bush is cheered by the sound of insect and bird; and the most watery courage is sustained by the heartening sunshine. But at evening it is different. Twilight is a brief and impressive affair. The almost tropic night comes swiftly. A tense expectant lull ensues. Even the river grows strangely still. The darkening waters slink by, and then, the sable veterans hold, strange things happen. A strong impulse, according to the tales in the kraals, is felt. The river-spirit calls from its oozy bed, and wandering maidens rush shrieking to a watery grave.

And from that lonely tomb, where the "Child of Night and Evil" lies, who knows but that the sombre storm-tossed soul then issues forth, through the phantom moon-shot shadows, to a waiting death-wrapped army; carrying the magic which once slew nations, and with it stirring new life into the bleached still limbs; lighting new courage on the fierce dead faces; drawing from the dusty throats the war-cry's brazen thunder; and from the women and children who died the wail of a terrible mourning.

"Who knows?" the *indunas* ask.

"Therefore in the dark," they say, "it is not well to be abroad, even for a wielder of clubs."

THE HOWICK FALLS, NEAR PIETERMARITZBURG.

CHAPTER XVI.

PIETERMARITZBURG.

Pietermaritzburg is essentially a place in which to reside, and it is as such a place that I think it will have a future.

SIR MATTHEW NATHAN,
formerly Governor of Natal.

AFTER the long jaunt of sight-seeing in the sub-tropics of coastal Natal, a day or two in a well-appointed train, where the catering is good and the attendance trained, is a rest rather than a bore. The journey to Bergville or Ladysmith en route to the Drakensberg has consequently the attraction of comfort and change, especially if a stay be made at Pietermaritzburg. So one settles down in the corridor saloon with satisfaction and with a growing anticipation as the train winds over the flats from Durban, along which, in the days of the ox-wagon, the worn teams used to flounder with their heavy loads to and from places as distant as Pretoria.

That is completely changed, and trains now carry the country's produce; long trains from the plains and hills, with coal from local Glencoe, Dundee, and Dannhauser; trains of mixed cargoes, timber from highland pastures and plantations; grain trains from the maize-belt; and trains fragrant with fruit.

In out-of-the-way places, under all conditions, on barren volcanic ridges, in densely wooded valleys, through warm light mists in the lowlands, or beneath the frost-rimmed stars of winter

CHURCH STREET, PIETERMARITZBURG.

nights on the plateau, you meet them, as from Durban the mail winds from height to height up into the hill air of Natal. The bougainvillaea, the azaleas, and the roses of the Berea, the tree-ferns and the papaws of Bellair, the groves of bananas and mangoes of the thirty-mile radius soon lie below, and the hills close in as the train ascends; not the little green foot-hills of the coast, but granite masses, great canyons, and lonely ravines, with which the fleeting passenger train, aglitter with plate-glass or electric light, forms an exotic contrast.

Thus between meal and meal the scenery changes. It comprises much of the best in Natal, but of a kind very different to that of the coast. Parts of the route are somewhat sterile, and at best volcanically fantastic; but other parts, as around Northdene and Sarnia, are wholly inviting, and from Fields Hill onwards the panorama, if the light be right, is worthy of close attention. In one place a waterfall comes elegantly down the precipice, and the sun at times dusts it with gold and pearl. As if for effective contrast, Krantzkloof, a series of shadowy canyons, follows, rugged and grand. And then there unexpectedly bursts on the delighted eye the Valley of a Thousand Hills.

Not far off lies Pietermaritzburg, seventy-one miles from Durban.

Pietermaritzburg is in the enviable position of being close to, though beyond sight of, great and busily worked coalfields; and it is the centre of

KARKLOOF FALLS, NEAR PIETERMARITZBURG.

extremely rich farming areas where sugar, tea, meat, maize, cotton, tobacco, dairy products, wool, and many kinds of fruit—all the necessaries and a notable portion of the luxuries of life—are produced in abundance. Indeed, many of the finest estates in South Africa are in the vicinity. Some of them may have taken half a lifetime to develop, but now their owners are mostly well-to-do, living in delightful surroundings, with occupation that is not only profitable but congenial.

Travelling around such places, one cannot but be struck by the reflection that though we live in a highly civilised age, though all the wilds have been tamed and there are no more Klondykes to exploit, still in young countries the money-making opportunities, the scope for brains and courage and energy, are as great as ever. The natural resources of South Africa, for instance, are really only on the eve of exploitation. That fact makes travelling in the Union more than ordinarily interesting: there are open on every side so many possibilities—commercial, industrial, and agricultural—so many points at which the traveller is constrained to pause and consider whether this would not be a good country in which to settle or at least to become financially interested.

Hence the significance of Sir Matthew Nathan's prediction, for to-day more than ever Pietermaritzburg as a place of residence particularly merits the attention of people of means who find British or European conditions, economic as well as climatic, increasingly trying. To the new-

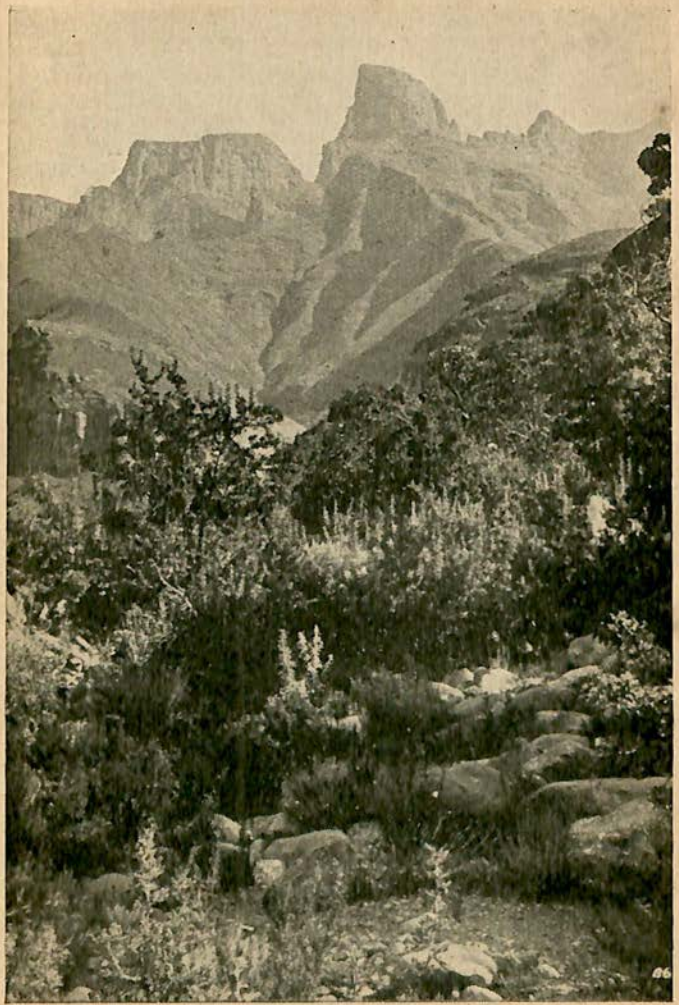
UMSINDUSI RIVER, PIETERMARITZBURG.

comer, Pietermaritzburg, though it is one of the principal towns of South Africa, may appear neither large nor pretentious. But after all it is not only the amount of brick and mortar in a town that counts. Amenities, atmosphere, are even more important, and. Pietermaritzburg is a bright, well-cared-for town with modern improvements and many quaint local features that on riper acquaintance prove lovable. It is a place of sunshine and plenty, a place having much of the picturesqueness of the sub-tropics, with, however, on the whole, a comparatively cool and agreeable climate, for though the summers are sometimes sultry, they are generally cooled by thunderstorms, and the winter is wholly delightful.

Socially and educationally, Pietermaritzburg has much to commend it. It was Natal's capital before the South African provinces united in 1910, and is still an important scholastic centre, the seat of a provincial council, and of a bishopric. Its situation, well over two thousand feet above sea-level, with Hilton Road, Fox Hill, and Sweetwaters, which are practically suburbs of Pietermaritzburg, fifteen hundred feet still higher, in a district which, if not uniformly beautiful, is in parts of rare beauty, makes the town popular not only as a place of residence, but as a holiday resort, and when the heat haze hangs like a hot blanket over the coast, it is to Pietermaritzburg and the little hill stations nestled above it that the Natalians themselves flock for relief.

UMLAAS FALLS, NATAL

For those who with rod, oar, haversack, or gun, desire recreation amid pleasant surroundings, the trout streams, mountains, and valleys around or within easy reach of Pietermaritzburg are a source of contentment. And for those who like a touch of the romantic about the places they visit, there is much about the associations of Pietermaritzburg that is tragic and even dramatic. Few towns have made bigger sacrifices in the cause of civilisation; few deserve a warmer regard, whether from Boer or Briton. As a sort of buffer against the barbarian, when to live outside the three or four comparatively populous centres was to live constantly in jeopardy, it has time and again stemmed native invasion. In the battlefields which so plentifully dot South Africa, no town, size for size, has paid a heavier toll, or had more fateful issues settled in its vicinity. Go beyond the timbered slopes of the Maritzburg Berea, pass the Karkloof Range, and beyond lie Fugitives' Drift, Rorke's Drift, and Isandhlwana. Take the train north from Pietermaritzburg, and soon you come to Frere, Chieveley, Talana, Estcourt, and Ladysmith, and there again see Caesars' Camp and Wagon Hill, the cairn where the Devons charged, and Spion Kop; and in the farness, Majuba.



FOLIAGED SLOPES OF THE RUGGED DRAKENSBERG.

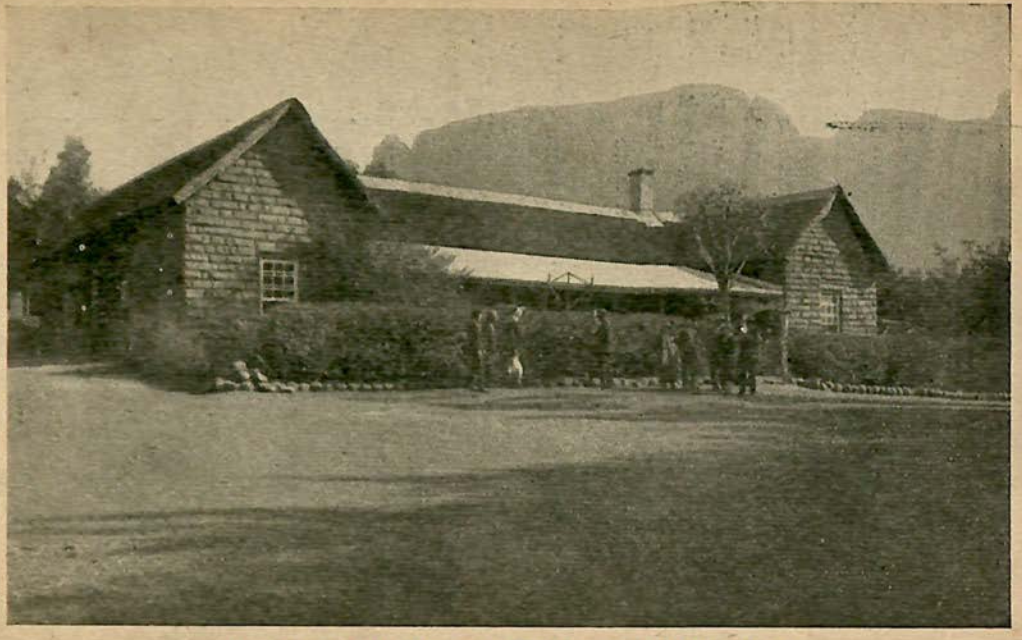
CHAPTER XVII.

THE DRAKENSBERG.

England! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved o'er the mountains afar.
—BYRON.

FROM Capetown eastwards, and then northwards right through the Transvaal, there is a more or less continuous chain of mountains, extending for over twelve hundred miles. Of this chain the most important section is the Drakensberg, or "Mountains of the Dragons."

The Drakensberg are to South Africa what the Himalayas are to India and Thibet, or the Rocky Mountains to North America. They form a rampart six hundred miles long, which separates Natal on the one side from Basutoland and the Free State on the other. The highest peaks, Giant's Castle, Cathkin Peak, and Mont aux Sources, are far apart, but all are in Natal. Giant's Castle rises to about twelve thousand feet above sea-level, or more than seven thousand feet above the surrounding country, and therefore is perhaps of most interest to the mountaineer; but Mont aux Sources, 10,600 feet, is the most popular, partly because it is comparatively easy to reach, but mainly because of its remarkable surroundings. The Tugela Gorge below Mont aux Sources, the Goodoo Pass adjoining, and the foothills and valleys one skirts to reach these, form



THE HOSTEL IN THE DRAKENSBERG NATIONAL PARK.

together, especially in summer, a panorama that for interest and beauty is unexcelled.

There is a well-managed hostel in the Drakensberg National Park at the foot of the mountains, where accommodation, guides, and ponies are obtainable; and from Ladysmith a regular motor service to the hostel is operated by the Railway Administration.

Visitors may, however, travel by rail to the branch-line station at Bergville, and should previously have arranged with the manager of the National Park Hotel at Oliviers Hoek to have transport ready at the railway station.

This we did. The train from Pietermaritzburg skirted wooded ravines, the whiff of wattle blossom occasionally came from a plantation to the carriage window, breakfast and lunch were served and still the train climbed higher and higher among the plentiful hills.

We were only a hundred and fifteen miles from Durban, but the scenes of the Natal coast were now five thousand feet below us, and already the last of the tropic days had crept softly away.

It was with a pang that we realized the fact, for the tour below had held many happy hours. But, as some one from the heats of India has said, a breath of the snow blows away twenty years of a man's age, and makes a boy of the veteran when again he smells the hills. There was at the time no snow on the Drakensberg, yet undeniably it was exhilarating to travel at that high altitude, in a rarefied atmosphere that had

a distinct mountain tang; for we were now in the environs of the mountains, and mist-wreathed peaks stood on the horizon.

To the plainsman this meant little. Even through his field-glasses he saw nothing to quicken interest, and it is worth mention that from the railway the Drakensberg, though in places seven thousand feet above the surrounding country, appear very much lower. They rise behind so many foot-hills and train the eye from height to height so gradually that by the time the highest peak is viewed a proper perception of its vastness is swamped by the intervening distance. One might travel all day parallel with the Drakensberg and hardly give them a second glance, and therefore to the plainsman the scene, though not unpicturesque, held nothing more than hundreds of other scenes through which we had passed on this tour.

To the hillman, however, it was like coming home. For him there was the promise that, behind the sterile outer ridges, there would be the refreshment of green mountain meadows, cool valleys, crystal streams; forests, like those in books of adventure, where the wild grape, the saffron, the elder, the yellow-wood, and the monkey-rope grow; canyons rich in the unique and grand; and over all a sunny air.

In the early morning of a summer day, beneath the bluest of rain-washed skies, we left Bergville for the mountain hostel. For fourteen miles, to the ford of the Tugela, that historic river over

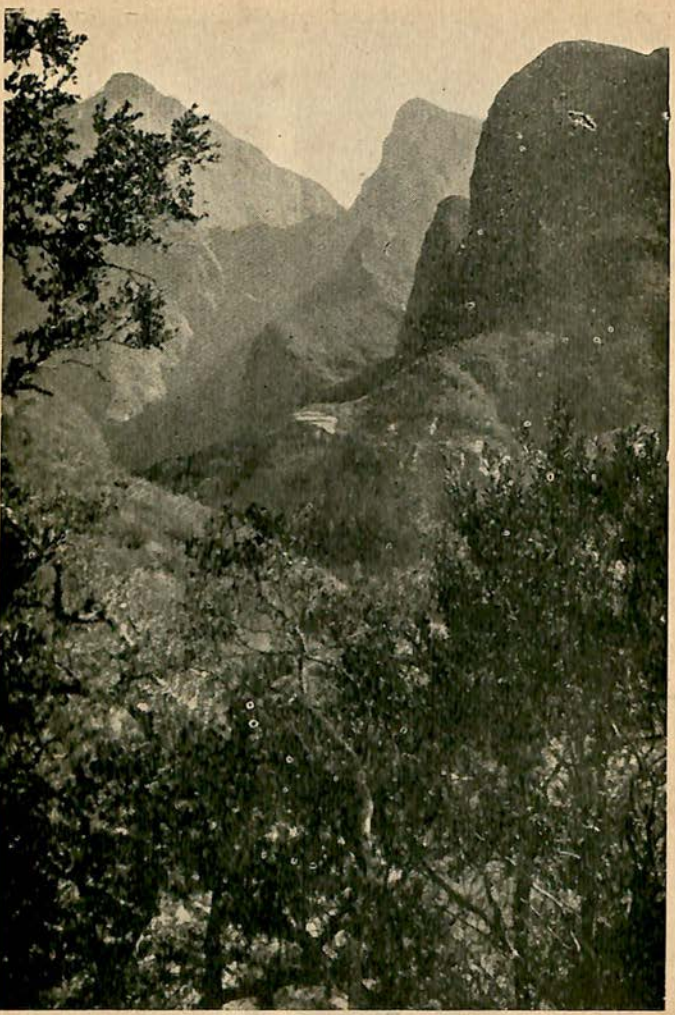
which Botha and Buller fought while White was besieged in neighbouring Ladysmith, the going was easy. Then the road became tortuous, in places precipitous, and the surroundings more and more grand.

The road as it nears the mountains winds round the painted foot-hills. Then over miles of meadow which, as it was early summer, were green and smooth as lawns. Anon there is a dip through never-to-be-forgotten valleys, soft in colouring and varied in outline; and when at last you emerge over a hummock, suddenly and at close quarters the main range stands revealed.

It is magnificent beyond anything that words or photography can convey. On the journey the valleys and foot-hills had interested us amply, but now the eye had something even more entrancing to contemplate in the colossal ramparts that overtopped and subordinated everything else in the landscape, and the high and lonely peaks that loomed in such austere beauty. Even the plainsman caught his breath and thrilled at the sight.

Our party assembled before dawn, and in Indian file took the trail for Mont aux Sources. We travelled leisurely, halting for long spells over the more striking views in silent mood as befitted the place, so that by sunrise we had covered only two miles.

It was seven before we reached Breakfast Rock, where a meal had been prepared, and was eaten with mountain appetite. There the ponies



A CORNER OF THE DRAKENSBERG NATIONAL PARK.

were left, and the journey continued on foot. We were then well into the six-mile-long Tugela Gorge or, as it might better be called, the Grand Canyon.

By now the sun was beating hotly down one side of the canyon, but soon the trail turned to the other side, and wound along a narrow ledge through the cool depths of a wood.

Woods are a feature of the canyon. They in places drape both its sides, and give grace and variety to the scene—a beautiful framework of foliage through which the distant peaks look down.

There we wandered in a cool twilight, among the yellow-woods and wild elder, where the tree-ferns grow, and a type of lily glows vividly on the banks of moss. Occasionally a wandering sunbeam added a new delight, and occasionally a fountain in a bower splashed us as we passed. It was the very place in which to idle away a summer day. Looking from a casement on the traffic of the city, the memory of those woods still comes to us, and stirs up longing and a lingering hunger for the mountains.

The woods were soon traversed, and then for the moment were forgotten, for now the true ascent began, through wild and romantic scenery.

Breathless we found ourselves where to the crash of chaos, aeons ago, the Titans of wind and frost and sun had wrought, in solid rock and celestial tintings, to create the truly impressive. The changing colourings in the changing light

MONT AUX SOURCES: FEATURE POINT OF DRAKENSBERG NATIONAL PARK

were marvellous—polished black and variegated granite, sandstone in pearl-grey and red, the various greens of the coppice which filled the gorge, the brilliant and, at that time of the year, abundant scarlet of the "bottle-brush"—over all, Mont aux Sources, royal blue on its lower slopes to where, lit by a blazing sun, its fluted peaks glowed, literally glowed, in pink and bronze. But the wonder of it gave place at last to the greater wonder of the enormity of all around. Gigantic boulders strewed the way in wildest confusion. Riven rocks towered loftily on either side. Great shadows fell athwart the defile and deepened where they fell; precipices to the bottom of which the sun reaches only from the meridian, yawned far below.

And always visible, sheer in the background, and ever impressed close on our consciousness, was Mont aux Sources. Rugged and broad above everything it stood, *a solitaire* in the great mountain shadows.

The party now found the canyon walls closing in around them. Indeed, at the so-called tunnel, which is really a defile, so narrow was the passage that, high above, the sky appeared only as a slit. And as we wound our way up those little-trodden recesses of the mountain, a silence, so deep as to be disturbing, brooded over the place. Sometimes a stone, carelessly dislodged, rushed down the abyss, awakening echoes; but these disturbances, instead of dispelling, seemed only to emphasise the solemn silence. As the party threaded its way

through the lonely defile, far above us, out of the clear blue sky, but carried by the rocky walls as by a sounding-board, came the cry of a mountain eagle, and as one man, all stopped, so out of place was even that slight sound.

We were now in the heart of the mountains. The air grew colder, the surroundings wilder and more grand. And still the trail rose higher and higher, and as the eye followed it up, peak peeped from behind peak, and Mont aux Sources loomed in a solemnity that somehow awed. It was like entering the sanctuary of some waiting deity; as though the looming peaks and silent ravines watched our intrusion. And some moiety of the lofty spirit of the place communicated itself to the climbers and caused them to tread softly and with reverence.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DRAKENSBERG (*continued*).

"Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight!
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks, and emerald turf."
—WORDSWORTH.

THE trip to Mont aux Sources, through the Tugela Gorge, ordinarily occupies two to three days. But much is missed. Indeed, to this trip alone a leisurely week can be devoted, so much is there to enjoy, especially if besides the spirit and atmosphere of the place one takes an interest in botany, geology, serious climbing, painting, or photography; and more especially if the traveller is addicted to the seducted pastime of trout fishing.

Therefore on some of the long excursions one cannot return to the hostel by dark, but must sleep in the mountains.

Night in a mountain cave or hut is a novel experience, and as bedding, food, and attendance are provided from the hostel, it is an experience that even the fastidious will find tolerably comfortable. This advantage of not being tied to any particular spot for food and bed, enables one to explore so wide an area that at the time of our stay visitors who had been there a month were only partly through their programme, and had booked for a further period.

With so many places in the vicinity worth visiting, and so many opportunities for a daily picnic on the grand scale, it is not possible to indicate all.

"THE DEVIL'S WINDOW"—DRAKENSBERG RANGE.

Our second trip was through the Goodoo Gorge. This route takes one from Natal to the corner of Basutoland and the Free State; and it is also another way of getting to Mont aux Sources—not to the front and base of Mont aux Sources, as when one goes through Tugela Gorge, but to the back and top of the Mont, 10,600 feet above sea-level. It is like going up the grand staircase of the continent.

The pass at the head of Goodoo is one of the main outlets in these mountains. It is a miniature Khyber, with an interesting and considerable traffic in the season when the Basutos—the mountain tribe of South Africa—stalk through in their picturesque patches, bringing grain or wool on their shaggy ponies. These ponies are a distinct breed—pot-bellied, hollow-flanked, and somewhat unkempt owing to an almost exclusively grass diet and an entire lack of grooming. But what they lack in appearance they make up for in prescience, endeavour, and even a shamefaced friendliness. And as it is on such mounts that one explores the place, one grows to love the breed, with that mixed feeling felt for a dear but disreputable friend.

These Basuto ponies, with goat-like agility, walk for preference on the edge of things, whether to show what they can do or merely in the hope of one day falling over, is still the subject of debate. And as they have done so for generations, and have a pioneer's lust for the untrodden, the result is a wealth of paths that hang precipitously over the gorges, and twist and rise and

dip with great abandon, and in so many changes of light and shade, that there is always the charm of variety, always an aspect of new interest.

That is the attraction of Goodoo. It has not, perhaps, the grandeur of Tugela Gorge, but it has so many windings and perspectives that the eye is constantly intrigued.

One keeps early hours. The coming of dawn is fresher than in town; one rises from sleep without reluctance; and after an early breakfast it was usual to saddle the ponies and be off without delay.

Down from the heights, as we ascended, there came a full-flavoured mountain air, with a tang of mist and heather in it, that tasted good in the nostrils. There was a sparkle in the sunshine; warm colours lay on the nearer rocks and lit the peaks. And over the scene lingered a summer haze that softened the air and tinted the valleys —the long blue mountain valleys round which our little procession filed.

It was a golden day, sunny yet cool; so tempting that the deer grazed far down the glades, beyond their usual hour; and, as we ascended, occasionally a duiker or rhebuck would glide from the scene, with more than the ordinary grace of even a wild thing.

At times a rider and his horse, like pygmies in heroic sculpture, would be perched on some mighty hummock, shirt flapping and mane streaming in the merry breeze; or round buttresses where hardly a zephyr came, they would creep on the

utmost edge of precipices. There was all the illusion, to one looking on, of great physical energy strenuously expended and perils bravely encountered. But really the exertion was insufficient to tire even the languid, or the danger to deter the timid, so easy was the going, so surefooted and docile the pony.

The illusion was, however, only one of several encountered as we ascended. What, for instance, out of deference to the feelings of the guide, we had called woods, though when seen from below they appeared only as scrub on a ledge of the canyon wall, now proved to be a forest—one of the few South African forests in which tall native timber still flourishes, piled somehow in among the mountain crags, and sweeping up a steep defile to a cascade and grotto; the whole forming as alluring a spot as a poet could desire.

It was a scene such as Scott would have loved to limn—an appropriate setting for a lay on some vanished minstrel, or the background for some old border ballad; the sort of scene one would associate with troubadours, border alarums and excursions, and such-like trappings of romance.

Unfortunately for the picturesque, however, veracity compels the admission that these mountains have apparently had only one tenant. That was the "Child of the Mountains," as the Bushman was aptly called; even he has gone, and all that remains as a memorial to him are a few rock paintings and a singularly bad reputation. Of the two, perhaps the rock paintings have proved the more durable.

BUSHMAN ART ON A ROCKFACE IN THE HILLS.

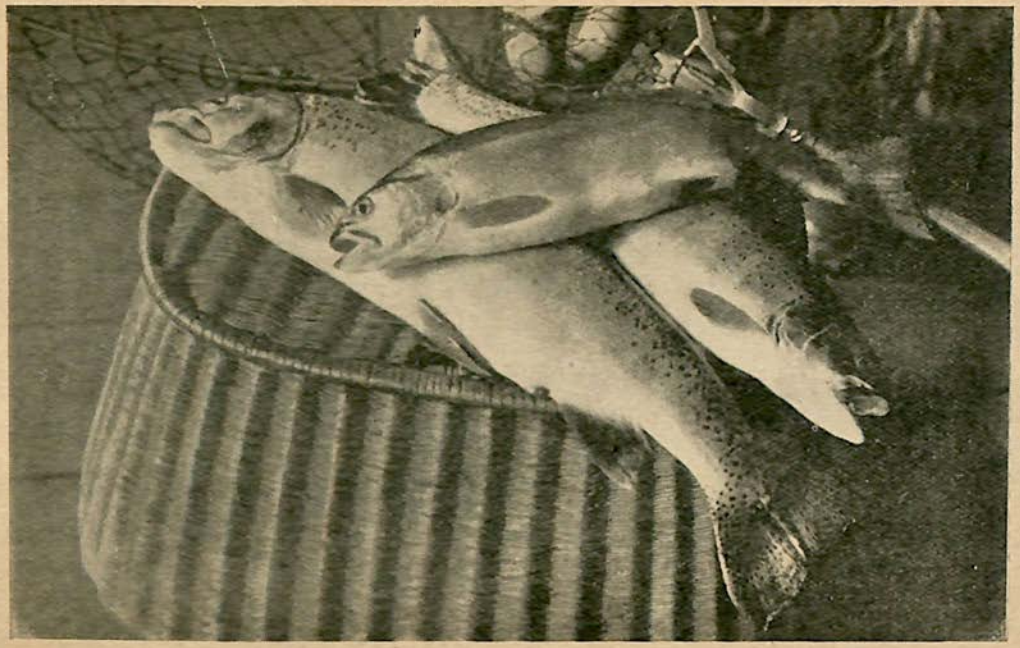
Generally they are crude, such as an untrained hand might idly trace. Yet there is much that is surprising about those paintings. They are the conceptions of rude but observant minds, and ungainly on the whole though the drawing may be, the artist at times contrives a happy touch that gives subtlety to attitude and expression, and hits off the animal or scene most justly.

Even the best of these painters, however, were noteworthy, not for their delicacy or point, but for the fact that of all South Africa's untutored natives, the lowest in the social scale was the only one in whom artistic promptings stirred.

Of all mankind the Bushman was the lowest. He was detested and hunted by surrounding peoples, white and black. He was an outlaw because of his murderous and marauding habits, and more an animal than a man, living in a lair or cave, dispensing almost entirely with utensils or other property, and possessing social and family instincts hardly more developed than those of the baboons.

Yet the fancy and impulse of an artist sent him laboriously to chip on the living rock, and cunningly to colour, in pigments he had contrived from roots and minerals, such pictures as floated through his prehistoric brain. Perhaps ages ago he brought the talent from Egypt; but, whatever the explanation, the result is apparent throughout South Africa.

As therefore in travelling the country one meets much allusion to the Bushmen and their paintings,



TROUT FROM A STREAM IN THE DRAKENSBERG.

a word or two about this strange and vanished people may be in place, especially as the Drakensberg was one of the fastnesses in which the Bushman found refuge—a refuge strangely congenial, a fastness wild, lonely, and remote as the little man himself.

One admirable trait the Bushman always had—a passionate love of freedom, for which he deemed no sacrifice too great, preferring, as happened in the end, to die rather than serve, or even live, under the European régime. Always, as civilisation spread through the country he managed to evade its influence, living often out of touch with even his own fellows, alone in the wilderness with his diminutive mate and their naked brood. There, as a tracker and hunter, he was without rival; some hold that he was even on speaking terms with birds and beasts; certainly he knew all that went on in the wilds, being a wild thing himself.

Had the Bushmen been content to remain merely picturesque, they might have flourished to the present day. But in time they became banditti. Like the Border moss-troopers of old, it became

> Their gain, their glory, their delight,
> To sleep the day, maraud the night
> O'er mountain, moss, and moor.

They became a scourge to white settlers and kafirs alike, sweeping off live-stock with a dexterity so uncanny as to suggest to many that animals would follow the voice and directions of a Bushman as of a blood relation.

Such raids naturally led to reprisals, and as the Bushmen shot their poisoned arrows on sight, it became a warfare without parley or quarter, and slowly but surely to their robber forebears the Bushmen passed over, with arms in their hands and battle in their hearts. All that now remains of them is a memory, recalled, as in the Drakensberg, when one comes across a weathered daub that speaks of the past—speaks so insistently that it is not hard to imagine the little bandit back again, oppressing the world below, and perhaps more cruelly oppressed by the spirit-world which his fancy pictured above; a little man of bronze and gloom, lonely in vast surroundings.

Such, or nearly such, was the tale the guide related in the quiet noon. For a while we meandered with the river, through a shadowy mountain ravine. Then curiosity being stirred sufficiently for the exertion of reaching the Bushmen's paintings above, we left the horses for a while and entered the forest. Through strata of light mist, and cool air of old mould dampened by a recent shower, we climbed for perhaps thirty minutes, in among the big trees, where the Berg bamboo tangled the paths, and the monkey-rope hung derelict, dripping like ships' cables.

The spirit and atmosphere of the place were somehow reminiscent; they fitted exactly the theme to which we had listened below; and as at last we entered the grotto, this we felt was just the dramatic setting for such a tale—just the place for the little people whose favourite nook it may have been.

We were soon surrounded by a square of rock and wood. And though the shower of rain had now passed and the sun was again shining strongly, so narrow was the grotto, so lofty and sheer its surrounding walls, that only a subdued light entered, which gave a strangely mystic radiance to the falling waters, the polished rocks, the pool, and surrounding foliage.

Such was the Bushmen's grotto, once their home now perhaps their sepulchre—a kind of Valhalla, hall of the slain.

It is known as Goodoo Bush Fall, but such a name misses the spirit of the place. Indeed, we even travelled in thought down the years, and pictured some little bronze figure lingering there, in the solitude and grandeur, far from the haunts of men; some wild maid of the mountains, the last of her race. It wants that human touch—the rude beauty of rounded limb and glistening copper skin, perched say on some great polished boulder, the curtain of ever-falling water for background, and the pool and its reflections framed by the forest and grotto—to make a picture even more haunting in its appeal than the Bushmen paintings we had come to see.

The horses, when we returned to the ravine below the forest, were grazing quietly, though baboons were clearly visible on adjoining slopes. A native from the hostel had kindled fire, and after lunch, to the drowsy cooing of mountain doves, we spent a restful half-hour on the grassy banks of the stream. Then girths were tightened and we mounted again.

RAMPARTS OF THE MIGHTY DRAKENSBERG.

In winter Goodoo Gorge can at times be desolate enough. There is then often snow at that altitude, a biting wind whistles from above, and the hard cold splits even the rocks. But now we travelled along the edge of valleys melodious with running waters; the slopes bright with grass and flowers, and the air mellow. And so, travelling beneath huge battlements and turreted walls, the hours slipped past unnoticed as steadily we ascended. Then unexpectedly the aneroid showed an elevation of 10,000 feet. We were on top. It was the intense moment of the trip. There we sat, like gods, limitless in our outlook; yet, unlike gods, hypnotised by the vastness of the view that filled the eye.

Great prospects seen from such a height fill the spectator with elation, and he must be cold in heart who fails to warm to such a view. Across the darkening peaks we gazed, into what is not merely empty immensity, but, at that time of the year, a very lovely part of Africa—an amity of woods, waters, pastures, and mountains, a realm varied in the renewal and promise of nature. And if seen in the glow of a summer sunset, far along, from peak to peak, the glorious colouring burns, as the sun holds colloquy with the mountains, till at last the level rays dip over the horizon, night comes on, and the cold creeps down.

So you gather in the cave, round the mountain camp-fire, where the shadows deepen, and the hungry flames lick round the cooking-pots. Boots and clothes, from contact with the flora, exhale the pleasant odour of grass and herbs. And in

MONT AUX SOURCES: THE SUMMIT.

that air, food—and then tobacco—taste doubly good, as after dinner one idles round the camp-fire, listening to mountain tales and transport yarns of the "good old days." But at last the fire dies down, each seeks his bed of blankets spread on bracken, the darkness creeps up closer round the cave, peace lays a gentle caress on the camp, and one by one the drowsy minds, remitting care, sink into sleep; and soon nothing but quiet breathing is heard in the hush of the mountain night.

It was midnight when we woke. The sky was very full of stars. It may have been the altitude, standing as we were so far above earth exhalations, but those stars, we thought, burned more brightly than any seen before—pendant stars so lustrous, and so large, that they seemed quite close to us and friendly, closer and more friendly than the darkened earth below.

Indeed, there was in the situation something of what would probably be felt if while still conscious one could be transferred to another planet. For as the moon lifted itself above the horizon, and poured its silvery light, all sense of time and space was lost. The vastness of the view eclipsed that seen by day. The lower peaks appeared only as silver points in the ether; far below, great clouds hurried by in ragged procession, and blotted the plains from view. Only the moon and the vapour held sway, and we, as it were cut off from the mighty shadow-show of rock and vapour below, seemed detached and circling, as on some dead and distant planet.

BLOEMFONTEIN: CAPITAL CITY OF THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ORANGE FREE STATE.

"Ah, but the clear light of dawning!
Ah, but the freedom it spelt!
The limitless view of life's morning,
The call of the veld."

FROM the Drakensberg we went to the Orange Free State, travelling by railway from Ladysmith; and soon, at a point a little north of Mont aux Sources, the rocky escarpment which buttresses the great inland plateau was again before us. Up this, like a fly in a cup, the train climbed out of Natal. It was a laborious ascent until Van Reenen's Pass was reached. There we were again on the plains—the high plains that lie at from four to five thousand feet above the sea.

Natal and the Indian Ocean were now in the background. On our right was the Transvaal, with Swaziland tucked in the south-eastern corner, and Rhodesia farther north. On our left was Basutoland, and westward, straight in front of us, was the Orange Free State, the central Province of the Union.

The situation, as we waited in that lofty pass, was appropriate for reflecting a little on what we had seen of the country and its resources. Wherever we had gone there were signs of progress: manufactories were increasing, better farming methods were being employed, more of the base metals and minerals were being turned to account. Taxation was comparatively light,

the public finances were sound, and industrial disputes were by no means as acute as in most countries. Indeed, opinion everywhere concurred that the Union was not only highly prosperous, but in the present condition of the world one of the happiest countries in which to live.

These things merit mention; they have an appreciable influence on travel. Waiting at Van Reenen for our car, we recalled the hundreds of miles of maize fields we had passed on the tour. The coastal belt of Natal and Zululand had been a waving sea of sugar-cane. Great apple orchards were coming into bearing on the uplands, and still greater groves of oranges in the warmer regions. The south-west portion of the Cape was bright with innumerable vineyards and orchards of peaches, pears, and plums. And everywhere we found sheep and cattle in increasing numbers and of improved breeds.

Thus, besides being attractive residentially, the Union offers scope for capital and enterprise. This is especially true of the Orange Free State, which to the casual glance may not appear very productive, but in reality is one of the most fertile areas in South Africa.

The eastern portion of the Province is well watered, and produces on a large scale wheat, maize, oats, and potatoes. Westward the countryside is seen to be drier, in parts very dry, and liable to long spells of drought. Yet the Orange Free State is on the whole exceptionally good cattle country, with a large output of butter and

cheese and about a third of the wool produced in the Union.

Indeed, no South African Province has made more notable progress in the last twenty years than the Orange Free State; and even greater developments are before it, notably in the irrigation projects, large and small, which promise to revolutionise the productivity of the drier regions.

The South African abroad must often be astonished by the scant knowledge which people in Britain, America, and Europe have of South Africa. Generally, however, they do know something, if only by repute, of its climate. The reputation is deserved. No country has a perfect climate. That of South Africa can at times be trying, especially in the dusty season. But on the whole it is probably as delightful and beneficial as will be found anywhere. How delightful is perhaps realised by South Africans only when they have been away from their country some time. It is a splendid asset. In time it must largely attract that body of moneyed people anxious to escape the European winter. They may find the sun in other places as near or nearer their homes; but they will hardly find it shining over such a variety of travel attractions as in South Africa.

Situated on a high plateau almost in the subtropics as the Free State is, there is a warmth yet crispness in its atmosphere. The air, even in so large a town as Bloemfontein, is pure and sparkling—a dry, bright mountain air, very invigorating. It is worth while going to Bloem-

THE VAAL RIVER AT PARYS.

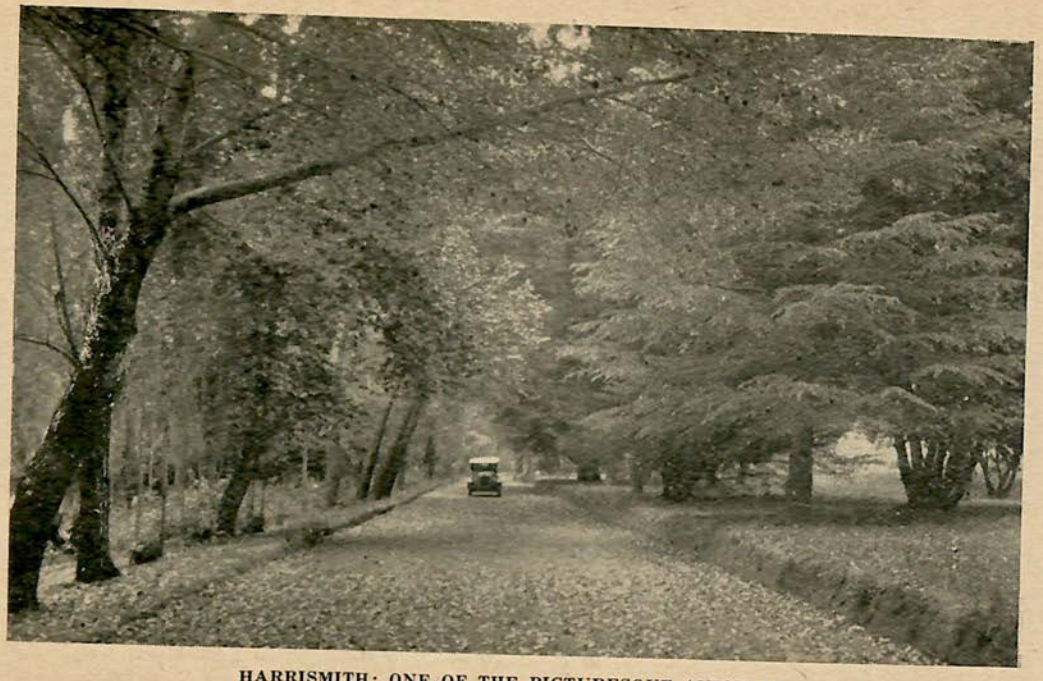
fontein just to breathe the air. There is a conscious benefit and even enjoyment in the process. The summer days are often hot, but never enervating; usually the nights are cool, still, and starry. In winter little rain falls, and then only at long intervals. Then every day is a day of brilliant sunshine, the nights are frosty but clear and dry, and one has all the exhilaration of a European winter with few of the discomforts.

Much of the Free State resembles the Karoo, but most of it is prairie-like—great grassy plains hundreds of square miles in area. They are diversified in places by solitary kopjes, low ridges, or even wooded river valleys as at Ficksburg, Parys, Kroonstad, and Senekal; in the main, however, the plains are flat and featureless, almost devoid even of trees.

Like the Russian steppe, or much of the United States and Canada, the plains of the Free State claim attention more for their productivity than for their scenery. They interest the home-maker or investor rather than the traveller. Yet even for the traveller, if he be in the mood, there is about those plains a moving fascination felt everywhere on the South African veld by those who sojourn awhile in its by-ways and do not merely hurry through by train.

" It is a fascination," a prominent authority has written, " indescribable yet strong; and those who have tasted it never weary of it, or cease to feel the longing to return once they have left it."

Of course, the veld, like the desert or the sea, having about it much that is sombre and harsh,



HARRISMITH: ONE OF THE PICTURESQUE AVENUES.

does not affect all alike. Many, especially newcomers, are repelled; they feel only the monotony, are wearied to the soul when travelling perhaps a whole day and seeing only an occasional small and drab village. But others, and their number has grown since men acquired virile tastes as the result of their experiences in the War, are peculiarly susceptible to nature in its large moods. The vast and rough-hewn appeals to them. They feel the freedom of the veld. The mysticism of the lonely places draws them. They respond to the appeal of the solitude. If they have capital, they want to get away to the uncontaminated spaces of the young countries, either to shoot big game or to farm.

The eastern portion of the Free State, with its comparatively broken formation and ample rainfall, is scenically and productively much like the best parts of Natal or the Transvaal. But even in the west there are many pleasant characteristics about the land and the life. There is a man in Britain who used to farm in the western Free State. In his day markets were not so good, nor local farming conditions nearly so well understood as now, so he did not prosper in South Africa. But some day he will come back. He is one of a type, and though he lived in the drier part of the Free State there were some experiences that he now finds quaintly attractive, when he looks back on them, say, from a fog in London, or when, depressed by a drizzling winter day, he longs for the sun.

It is with a pang, at such a time, that he recalls those other days on the veld when he rose with the dawn. Along the winding sheep-paths, in that cool grey hour, the guinea-fowls would slink, one behind the other, with raucous cries of complaint till the seed-beds were reached. Around would lie the quiet veld, the pungent odour of wild herbs scenting the strong air, with maybe here and there a vapoury remnant of the night, and overhead, in the cloudless sky, the lingering morning star.

Little would be moving, as the horseman picked his way to inspect some distant borehole or boundary fence; but anon perhaps a springbok would climb the ridge, shake dew from coat and sleep from eye, sniff at the flushing east, then bask contentedly in the first warm rays.

And so day would come on the veld, and the sheep would trail from the kraals in a cloud of alkali dust, with much bleating from ewes and lambs, and the shrill cries of the Hottentot herd-boys. Then there would be rams to be classified, wool to be baled and dispatched, a post-mortem examination of sheep mysteriously deceased, stock thefts to look into, grazing to study, and plans, big plans, to be made, for the next season's mating and for conserving more water.

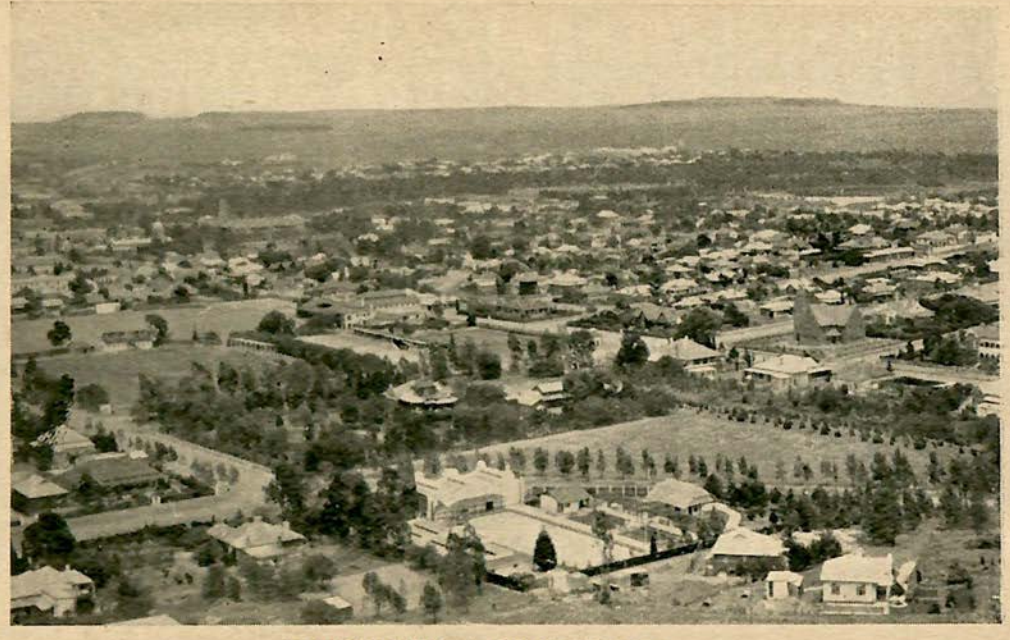
So the morning wears on, till the heat dances on the plain, and the sheep, weary of grazing, gather in bunches, panting in what little shade the euphorbias and aloes give. Then shutters and doors are closed to darken the farmhouse and exclude the hot air, and man relaxes. Even the dignified and decorous secretary bird steps from

the hot white sunshine, and from the studious search for vermin. But in an hour or two a revivifying air comes in little gusts. Then grazing is renewed, and work is taken up again.

Musing thus, beneath the lowering sky of another land, you recall with peculiar pleasure the solitary kopje and the sober tints of the veld that, as the afternoon wears on, become idealised and refined in the waning light. A great peace then settles over all, a haze of mauve creeps over the veld, and a little chill steals into the vigorous air. The flocks return contentedly chewing the cud, the red-legged francolins seek patches of grass for warmth in the oncoming night, and the korhaan sounds its fretful cry through the gathering dusk.

Then flames leap before the native huts, and the acrid smoke of dung-fires, than which nothing is more subtle to cause nostalgia in the exile from South Africa, comes to the nostrils.

On the stoep sunburnt men yarn, probably of the old days, forty years ago, when every kind of game roamed those plains—zebra, kudu, eland, ostrich, and occasionally even giraffe and elephant, and in the river valleys rhinoceros and hippopotamus. Probably debate is held on the relative merits of the big-game days of the past and the days of big farming possibilities of the present till, wearying of the subject, the talking wanes. The native fires die down, a few final orders for the next day's work are shouted to the huts, then pipes are knocked out, a last satirical look for



BLOEMFONTEIN: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW.

rain is taken, and, though it is an early hour, soon the farmstead, the huts, and the kraals are wrapped in peace. Night rules the plain, a desert wind fans all to dreamless sleep.

This summary is not much to look at on paper, but those who have lived the life will generally admit that, somehow, it was attractive. However much at first one may detest the humdrum routine, the lack of variety, the plain fare and simple ways, in time, though it may take years, one is almost certain to acquire a deep and lasting affection for the veld, the life, and the people. Even the Taal, which at first repels as guttural and crude, becomes a treasured acquirement when at last one can speak it. It is an old-fashioned Dutch, somewhat corrupted and much clipped in vocabulary. It has a little, though growing, literature, and is hardly understood outside South Africa. Yet it is, if one may use the term, a felicitous language, enabling a friendly thought to be expressed in the most kindly way, even between people of very different rank; and the result is an ease of intercourse and a high degree of good feeling between those who speak it.

There are just over two hundred thousand Europeans in the Free State, though it is nearly as large as England; indeed, the whole of the Union has a European population smaller than that of many a capital town in other countries. Hence most South African towns are small, judged by European standards; but nearly all are prosperous and growing. In the Free State, Jagersfontein and Koffiefontein are the centres of

VALSCH RIVER, KROONSTAD.

an important diamond industry. Parys, a charming sylvan village on the Vaal, has an increasing number of rural industries, and attracts an ever-increasing number of holiday-makers. Winburg serves a great sheep district. Smithfield has an important trade in wheat and cattle. Harrismith, beside being a health and mountaineering resort, transacts the business of a district famous for its live stock. Kroonstad is the principal pleasure-ground of the Free State, and the hub of a large and rich farming area.

The principal town is Bloemfontein, with a population of fifty thousand, of which twenty-three thousand are Europeans. It is seven hundred and fifty miles from Capetown and two hundred and sixty-three miles from Johannesburg. Being the most centrally situated town of consequence in South Africa, with good railway connections in every direction, it is a convenient meeting-place, and most of the important conferences are held there. It was the place where President Kruger and Sir Alfred (later, Lord) Milner met, in 1899, in an endeavour to avert the Anglo-Boer War. There Lord Roberts made his first important halt in his march on Pretoria. And there, the aim of statesmen for generations, to bring the people of South Africa into one fold, was achieved in 1909 when the foundation of the South African Union was laid.

When the Free State was a Republic, Bloemfontein was the capital. It is now the seat of a Provincial Council and of the highest Court of Appeal in the country.

RADIO HOT SPRINGS AT ALIWAL NORTH.

Socially and residentially Bloemfontein has much to commend it; the climate is invigorating, and though the permanent population is not large, there is always a considerable stream of all classes attracted to the courts and conferences, and especially to the great agricultural shows and sales which are a feature of the place, and which have all contributed something towards creating an enterprising and very comfortably appointed town. Indeed, after a sojourn on the veld, or in the average dorp with its small " hotel " and store, its smaller railway station, its church and one straggling street, Bloemfontein is by contrast a place of much attraction, with good hotels, theatres, clubs, public baths, a university college, polytechnic, national museum, and many excellent public buildings. It is also likely to become an important manufacturing centre, tapping as it does a country rich in raw materials, and already many large projects are afoot around it.

ORIENT BEACH: EAST LONDON.

CHAPTER XX.

EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE.

The sweet of life is something small,
A resting by a way-side wall
With God's good sunshine over all.

—GILBERT.

FROM Bloemfontein to East London by train is a journey of just over four hundred miles, occupying a day and night. A few hours after leaving Bloemfontein, the Orange River is crossed and one again enters Cape Province, the eastern portion of it.

The crossing of the Free State border, however, implies no immediate change. The train continues amid the same environment of lonely veld —a flat yet in a way impressive veld, vast as the sea, peaceful as the desert, with something too of the fitful moodiness of both that transmits itself to the traveller.

This was noticeable among the passengers. A few, hardened by experience, but not unappreciative of the comfortable train appointments, contentedly settled down to lounge and gossip. Some, happening at the moment to be in tune with their environment, frankly enjoyed it, if only for the sunny brightness of the land. Others, depressed by the sameness and extent of the veld, found the hours leaden.

Thus afternoon wears on, and tea is served from the dining-car. Round it the talk becomes more spirited, and if the travellers are acquainted with other lands and with the gruelling battle people

QUEENSTOWN, CAPE PROVINCE.

there have had to make such lands largely productive and prosperous, generally the talk will be about the big future before South Africa. It is a coming country, great with possibilities.

As the shadows lengthen and deepen round the kopjes which now become more numerous, Stormberg is passed, and towards sunset, as the train approaches Queenstown, a section of the Cape Province is entered, not perhaps naturally richer than the section passed, but more developed—more closely settled. This area is strikingly mountainous in parts, with an occasional trout stream, and pastures that show the skill of the owners. The trees were of a nobler proportion than we had seen for some weeks—gums, beefwoods, and oaks; the tillage careful, and there was an air of prosperity about each farmstead.

We were now within a hundred and fifty miles of East London, travelling through the old border country, better known as Kaffraria in the bygone days when the early settlers fought for existence. Eastward beyond the Great Kei River lay the Transkei—the reservoir from which poured most of the native troubles that so sorely beset the early European settlers.

From this point our way lay among some of the noblest scenes in South Africa—a majestic panorama of mountain, forest, river, sea, and meadow that extends along the sea-board of Cape Province, from the Transkei past East London, Port Elizabeth, and Mossel Bay to Capetown.

The Transkei is a territory over sixteen thousand square miles in area, with a population of

PORT ST. JOHNS.

about twenty-five thousand Europeans and a million and a quarter natives. It is in the main a native reserve, where, as in Zululand, colourful native life may be seen in its patriarchal simplicity.

Besides its ethnological interest, the Transkei is in places strikingly beautiful. Port St. Johns, in particular, makes a powerful appeal through its wild splendour. In Kaffraria the Amatola Mountains would alone raise the area to the rank of a first-class pleasure resort were it in Europe.

At present East London gets most of the attention. It is a well-equipped and growing port. The area it serves is not only large and rich, but holds great possibilities of development. It is in the main an area of high rainfall, good soil, and abundant sunshine.

Behind East London the land is therefore fitted to support a much larger farming and manufacturing population than it does. But as agriculture in the hinterland, and industries at the port, can expand only to the extent that capital is available, the development, though large, has not been as large as the natural excellence of the country merits. At present, though there is a varied production for South African consumption, the main exports are wool, skins, and hides. Orchards in increasing numbers are, however, coming into bearing, and considerable enterprise is being shown in developing beef production, dairying, and general farming, so that a few years should see an increased trade.

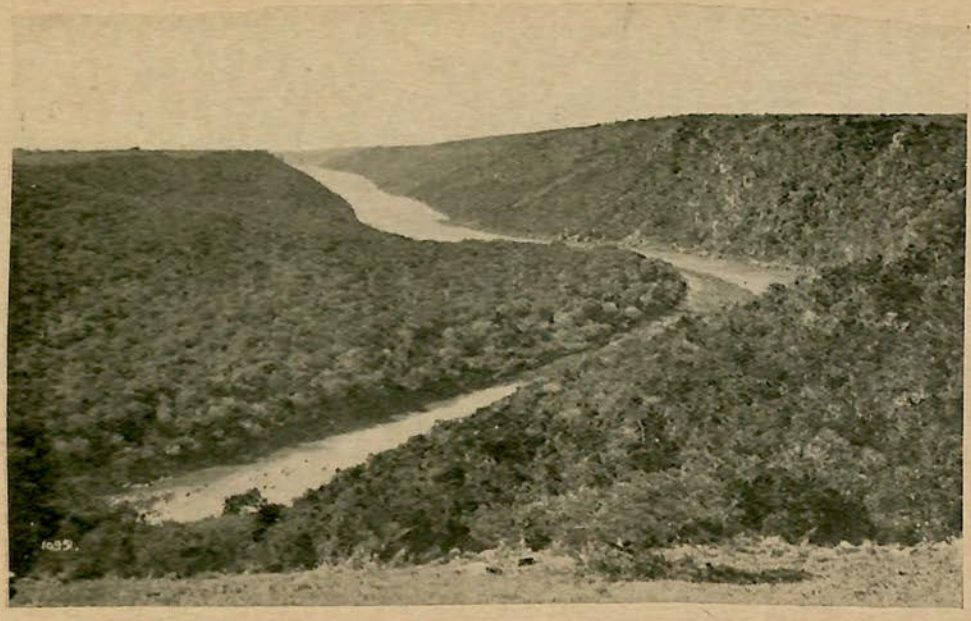
AT CERES: A MOUNTAIN RESORT OF THE CAPE.

To those, however, who travel for recreation, East London is perhaps of most interest as a place of sojourn. It is picturesquely situated on the Indian Ocean, at the mouth of the beautifully wooded Buffalo River. The adjoining country-side is in places striking and everywhere attractive. It is a country-side of wooded hills and green valleys, with here and there a mountain in the background, here and there a forest in some ravine; and nearer East London itself the impression is of rich meadows, in the season gay with the lilac petals of the spekboom and the golden blossoms of the mimosa.

The great attraction at East London is, however, the sea. Especially to those who have been inland awhile, sea sights and sounds are doubly alluring. The South African, being by blood a northerner, descendant of seafarers, responds to the call of the sea. He goes to it, if at all possible, at least once a year. When this great annual migration sets in, East London assumes a gala mood.

The season there is noticeably different to that at either Muizenberg or Durban. So genial is the climate that a large number of visitors, following the precept that " sunbeams are good for old bones and young," used to live *al fresco* during their holiday. But the old-time quaint town of canvas bungalows on the beach-grass has now been ousted by modern hotels.

The season was drawing to a close when we arrived, and already the visitors were leaving for the plains and the dry lofty plateaus a thousand



THE BUFFALO RIVER, NEAR EAST LONDON.

miles away. With us, too, time was pressing. Our stay in the country was coming to an end, and there was still much that we were under a resolution to see. Yet we stayed at East London. The weather was so perfect, the boating, bathing, and fishing so enticing, that the days slipped by with a rush.

In such a place you are apt to defer departure. When you weary of the shingles on which the league-long combers roll and of bathing in the foaming surf, when you are sufficiently browned and tired, when golf and fishing have lost their edge, and boating on the river reaches no longer entices, there is still a stimulus in the vigorous air and the sunshine. It lures you abroad along the grass-banked beach through bright woods. And as you round the headland, generally a brisk breeze nods the tree-tops, a strong sea-air refreshes the blood.

The shore beyond the headland is a lonely, fascinating one, seemingly remote, though in reality only three or four miles from the esplanade. There, from a safe vantage point, with a high sea running after a wild night off the Cape of Storms, you hear deep answering deep, and are, as it were, secretly party to the loosening of stupendous forces.

There is might, variety, and endless interest in the broken and excited waters. The thunder of a great surf fills the air, a constant spindrift, rising like smoke, coats the lips with salt, and stings the blood till it glows. Breakers, vast and green,

KING GEORGE FALLS (400 FEET) IN A DESOLATE CORNER OF THE CAPE PROVINCE.

crash with a thousand-ton shock, subside, and after a momentary hush, hurl themselves with redoubled vigour at the great dark rocks.

An hour's scramble brought us back to the esplanade. Night had closed in, but the place still wore a carnival air.

After the lonely farther reaches, it was an experience in contrasts to sit, with the Sauvignon invitingly in the ice-bucket, the noiseless waiters serving dinner, and round the rose-coloured table the hum of cheery talk.

Then coffee on the lawn, with an orchestra in the distance and the Southern Cross over all.

HUMEWOOD BEACH, PORT ELIZABETH.

CHAPTER XXI.

MIDLAND CAPE PROVINCE.

> The real use of travelling to distant countries and of studying the annals of past times is to preserve men from the contraction of mind which those can hardly escape whose whole communion is with one generation and one neighbourhood.
>
> —LORD MACAULAY.

HEARING that the area served by Port Elizabeth was in several respects remarkable, we decided to see it with some thoroughness. We therefore travelled, mainly by rail, through the picturesque and thriving industrial centre of Kingwilliamstown to Grahamstown, and then inland in a circle to Bedford, Cradock, Middelburg, Graaff-Reinet, and Uitenhage to Port Elizabeth.

On the journey to Cradock and Graaff-Reinet the country was the very opposite to that around Grahamstown and East London. We were again on the Karoo—as it happens, a rich, but to the casual glance, a desert-like Karoo. The air was dry, and the soil not only dry but drab-coloured. There were kopjes everywhere, and around the kopjes barrenness—a barrenness accentuated rather than relieved by what grew thereon.

Few deserts had a more woebegone appearance. The verdure, after the rainless winter, was an affair of withered twigs. The water-courses were dry. The polished ironstone reflected the heat as from a mirror. Near Graaff-Reinet, for example, the aptly-named Valley of Desolation, after the long drought of which we were to witness the

GROTESQUE NATURAL PILLARS—"VALLEY OF DESOLATION," NEAR GRAAFF-REINET.

dramatic end, was so Dantesque in sheer aridity, so like a calcined valley of the moon, that we longed, almost ached, for the moist smell of mould and the sight of gnarled tree-trunks and running water. Instead there was prickly pear, scrub, and desolation.

Yet curiously enough the trip was one which we remember with peculiar pleasure. The clearness, purity and tonic quality of the air were astonishing. The sun got into our blood and danced there.

It is an air which, as it were, unties the years from one's shoulders, so that, after a while on the Karoo, one stands erect with vigour renewed. And the daily sunshine—that most forceful magic —gives one a new perspective. Impressions may not be durable where there is so little by which to fix them; but while they last they are vivid. Every day is a golden day. Just to live is a pleasure. So that despite all we have here frankly set down about the Karoo, we travelled it with considerable enjoyment that heightened when we saw Graaff-Reinet in the smoky orange of a desert sunset.

Clouds banked up during the night. At dawn a storm hung lowering. All rejoiced, for the drought had been long and severe. The air was motionless, yet the thick dust that covered the cattle trails was strangely stirred. "Dust devils" rose like wraiths, hung fantastically poised awhile, and then expired. Earth lay expectant, waiting for the pent-up moisture. And expectation was in every heart. All hopes were turned to the sky.

Then the sun beat down as fiercely as ever, and the life-giving clouds passed on.

It was Nature's jest. Gloom settled firmly on the farmers. The orchards drooped in earnest. Gaunt sheep and goats nibbled a parched twig or two, and then lay down in apathy. It was a depressing spectacle.

Two days later there was no perceptible sunrise. A pall hung over the veld. Fitful lightning gleamed across the clouds. Occasional large drops of rain fell with a thud, and were sucked up greedily by the thirsty earth—fell at noticeable intervals, one here and there, leaving on the dust a crater-like dent. Then these, too, ceased, and all was still, dark, and ominous.

Of a sudden the heavens opened, a sea of flame flared above the veld. A crash as of planets in collision followed, flame leaped with flame across the sky, then all was quiet and dark again. At last, with a shriek, the deluge came. Hail and thunder cracked together—peal upon peal roared cavernously over the kopjes, and the driving rain came down in solid sheets.

The ten-month drought was broken. In a few hours thousands of tons of water had fallen, rivers were churning their banks to mud, even the chronically dry creek had caught some overflow and had become a mad torrent of tortured water on which flotsam swirled wildly.

Within a week, so swift is Karoo-growth after rain, the juice of succulent herbs freely lathered the jowls of the live-stock, and the sheep, when kraaled, chewed the cud of a heavy contentment,

Their troubles for the time were over. The season, they sensed, would now be one of plenty, for already every plant had quickened into life, every shrivelled stick had thrown out some blossom or leaf, the valleys and plains were mauve-green, and once again the Karoo was full of promise.

We mention this storm, and shall later draw a moral from it, because rightly considered it is the key to much that is curious in the economy of South Africa.

The miracle that is being wrought on the Karoo with water conservation is as heartening a spectacle as will be seen anywhere. The rivers are being harnessed, the wilderness is " being made to blossom like the rose." In Egypt the British have doubled the supply of water and doubled the cultivable area. South Africans are doing the same in their country, and so are gradually preparing to rank with the great producers.

Nowhere in South Africa is this more strikingly brought home than in the area served by Port Elizabeth. Draw a V on the map, from Port Elizabeth to Queenstown on the one side, and from Port Elizabeth to Graaff-Reinet on the other. In between is the area of greatest irrigation development in South Africa. The country there, though fertile, is on the whole dry, having a low rainfall. Yet such is generally the violence of the storm when rain does fall that millions of tons of water run to the sea and are wasted each year.

This is now being improved. A large capital has been invested, by Government and private

A VIEW OF PORT ELIZABETH.

enterprise, to imprison in reservoirs and turn to account much of that water. The task, entailing an outlay of several millions sterling, and more as new areas are taken in hand, is not only a costly but a heavy one. When the great storage reservoirs now being constructed are complete the area will become a rich one, producing great yields of almost every crop.

That much is certain, for what can be done with permanent water on the Karoo has already been abundantly proved, notably under the great irrigation works near Prieska.

With such developments in its hinterland, Port Elizabeth is destined for a big future. It is already an important export port of the Union, and, for variety of manufactures, one of its most highly developed industrial towns. Tanneries and the manufacture of boots and other leather goods are especially well developed and growing industries. Then there are foundries, and factories producing candles, soap, jam, biscuits, confectionery, cement, and two large motor car assembling plants. A great trade in wool is done, and wool-washing, and, in time, textile factories, and other new industries, to say nothing of a considerable expansion of present industries, may confidently be looked for.

Port Elizabeth has a good deal to commend it. It is a prosperous town of considerable architectural merit. Its quaint hilly situation lends itself to picturesque effect in building, and here and there is a touch faintly suggestive of a Swiss scene —villa terraces rising one above the other. On

RELICS OF PIONEER DAYS: CANNON IN A GRAHAMSTOWN SQUARE.

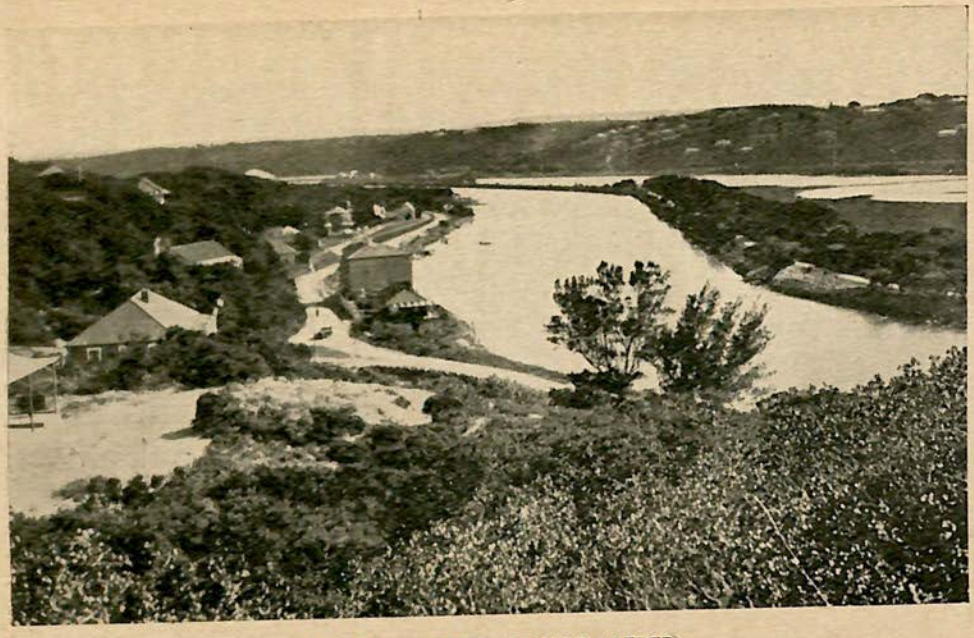
The Hill, a flat tableland overlooking the lagoon-like bay, are smart residences in pleasant grounds. Indeed, a holiday at Port Elizabeth can be very inviting, with all the amenities of a prosperous, progressive town, as well as boating at Zwartkops, jaunts to Schoenmakerskop and among the pines at Walmer, and sunlit hours on the sands of Humewood Beach, the fashionable bathing suburb.

Grahamstown, to which allusion has been made, is a hundred and seven miles by rail from Port Elizabeth. It is a cathedral city and important educational centre, charmingly ringed by a series of wooded hills.

Grahamstown was founded in 1812, and British settlers reached the vicinity in 1820. In the latter year the price of the Napoleonic wars was still being paid. Everywhere trade was bad, production was hampered, employment scarce, and the cost of living high. Thousands of people in Britain and Europe were overwhelmed with hopelessness.

The Governor at the Cape, impressed by the country around what is now Grahamstown, recommended to the British Government that settlers should be sent out to occupy it. The scheme, as it promised slightly to relieve the pressure in Britain, by making habitable what somehow became reputed a kind of colonial Eden, appealed to the public imagination. A grant-in-aid was voted. Ninety thousand people applied to come. Four thousand were selected.

The first contingent disembarked at Port Elizabeth in 1820. There were no landing facilities in



THE KOWIE RIVER AT PORT ALFRED.

those days, so the settlers rowed as near land as they could and, with their possessions, waded ashore.

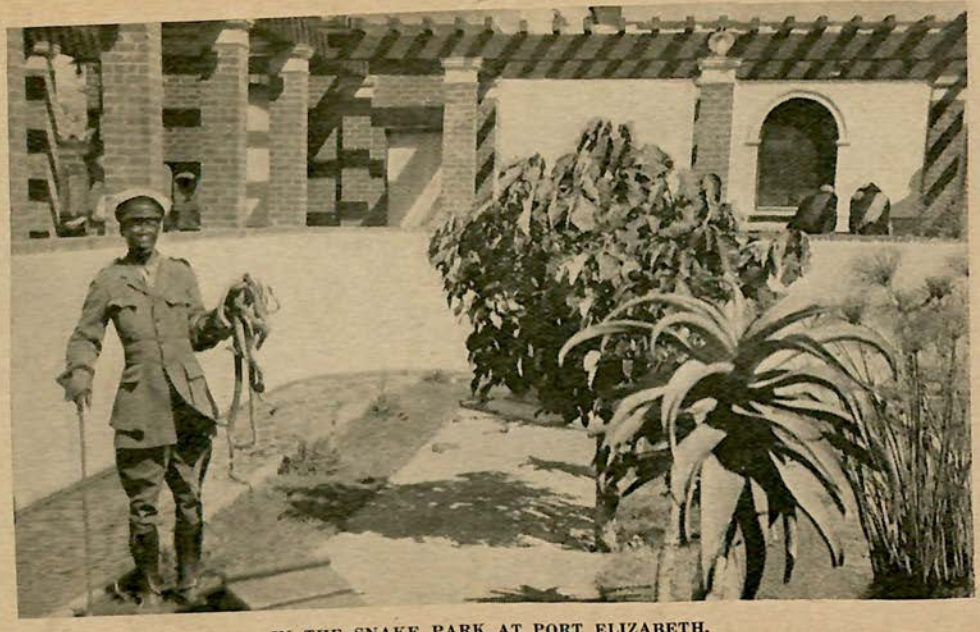
Wagons and guides were provided, and the settlers took the road to their new home, looking bravely to the future they were to shape there, or, round the camp-fire, pensively regarded the past.

One of the party has depicted the scene:—

> " The groups, with all their variety of mien and attitude, character and complexion, now dimly discovered, now distinctly lighted up by the fitful blaze of the watch-fires, and the exotic aspect of the aloes and euphorbias, in the wan light of the rising moon, had a very strange and striking effect. It made us feel, far more impressively than we had yet felt, that we were now indeed pilgrims in the wilds of savage Africa."

The country through which the new-comers passed was open and park-like in places, wildly mountainous elsewhere. Alternately the way lay through sunny valleys or gloomy defiles so narrow that the wagons could only just pass.

After many tribulations the destination was reached. On three sides sterile mountains rose, but the main valley was pleasant, with tall grass running to seed, and many trees, among which antelopes pastured. Huts were soon erected, and attention given to the means of livelihood. Dainty fingers, some perhaps more accustomed to fans than churns, made butter and cheese, soap and

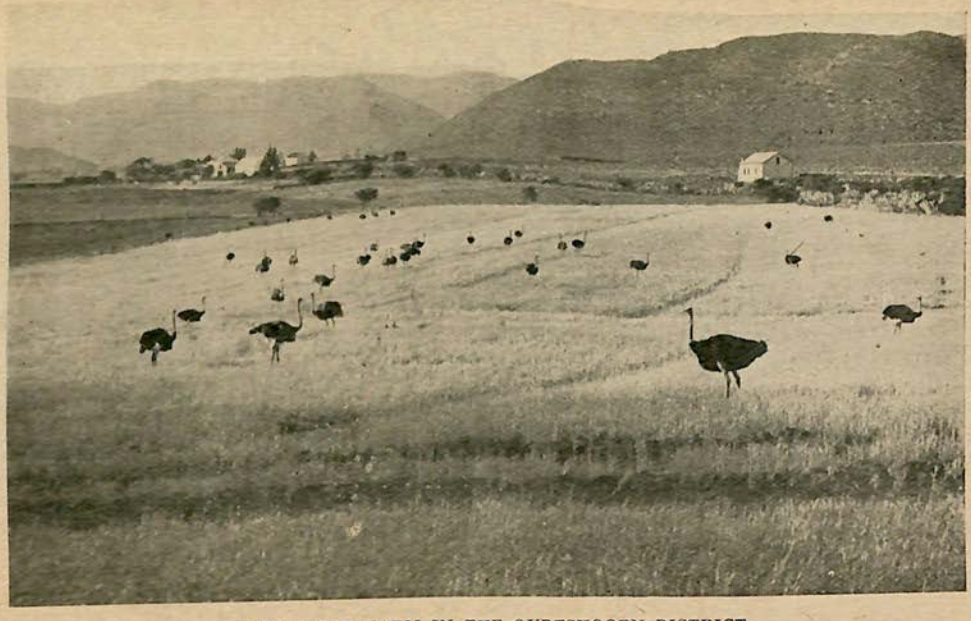


IN THE SNAKE PARK AT PORT ELIZABETH.

candles. And the minds of the men were bent in earnest on such pioneer work as tilling the land, handling live-stock, tanning sheep-skin with mimosa bark and cutting garments therefrom.

Such approximately were the people and the conditions that went to the development of the large and now important area of which Grahamstown became the ecclesiastical, commercial, social, and educational centre.

The brunt of terrible native wars, which the small bands of earlier Dutch settlers had borne with such lofty spirit, fell heavily on the newcomers. Grahamstown became the centre of the fierce struggle between white and black, generations passing before that outpost emerged from its troubles and peace and prosperity settled over it. Now gardens smile where once disaster abode, great pines and gums stand densely on the hills and line the streets, making, like the history of the place itself, a checker-work of light and shadow.



AN OSTRICH FARM IN THE OUDTSHOORN DISTRICT.

CHAPTER XXII.

OUDTSHOORN.

I pity the man who can travel from Dan to Beersheba and cry, "'Tis all a barren waste."
—STERNE.

OUDTSHOORN, like a palm grove round a desert well, is one of the pleasant surprises of South Africa. Its encircling mountains are for the most part sterile, but its valleys are bright with lucerne and vineyards, orange groves, orchards, tobacco fields, and the plumage of the domesticated ostrich.

The place is one of man's great triumphs over Nature. The rainfall there is scant, and but for a special dispensation the surrounding countryside would be like the rest of the Karoo. Fortunately, the large catchment area which the mountains tap converges on Oudtshoorn, so that instead of aridity there is the laugh of running waters.

The streams are small, but numerous and fairly reliable. They carry fortunes where they flow, so fertile is the local soil. Consequently in the surrounding valleys are some not only of the richest, but of the loveliest, farms in South Africa. Great vintages of brandy, heavy crops of tobacco and fruit are produced. But the main product is lucerne, for feeding ostriches and other livestock.

Ostrich farming is an industry in which South Africa leads the world. To give the best feathers the ostrich requires a desert climate and, what is

not usually associated with such a climate, an abundance of nutritious food, and around Oudtshoorn these requirements are fulfilled to perfection, with the result that the best feathers come from there.

To produce such feathers is a highly technical occupation, great experience and skill in the breeding and feeding of the ostriches being required. And as the ostrich feather, though of great beauty, is an article of adornment the demand for which rises and falls according to the changing fashions introduced by the milliner and dressmaker, the industry occasionally suffers from severe slumps.

Still, given the necessary skill and capital, in normal times it pays handsomely to farm high-class ostriches. Competition for birds of approved lineage is then great, and exceptional breeding ostriches have sold for as much as a thousand pounds a pair.

The feathers, when fully grown, and when the sheen in the flue is at its best, are taken from the wings and tail. No pain is inflicted. There is no plucking. The quill is cut, its root being left in the flesh where, after a while, it withers and comes out without hurting the bird. The ostrich is too costly, and too susceptible to good or bad usage, for cruelty to have any place in its treatment. The industry is one of the novelties of the country, and should be seen in passing, especially as around Oudtshoorn there is much else that repays attention.

The scenery, in places, is equal to that of the famed Hottentots Holland in the Cape. Schoe-

man's Hoek, for instance, is a delightful spot. The road to it skirts the foothills, winding around and about, and soon the many farms, with their precise-looking poplar and cypress trees, are far below. Above lie the gusty moors knee-deep in heather and bracken. And above the moor is the most charming glen imaginable—three hundred feet of foliage-hidden rock, down which a brilliant stream falls foaming.

Another notable outing is to the Cango Caves. This takes one among grand surroundings, through rich and picturesque valleys, beyond which mountain ridge lies locked in mountain ridge—surroundings that grow intensely wild and impressive as you skirt the Cango Valley, and so arrive at the entrance of the stalactite caves, in the foothills of the Zwartberg.

Through the years these caves were splendidly furnished; till now, like a buried palace in which everything was suddenly petrified, they contain suggestions of all that is elegant: of regal forms in stone; of banqueting chambers richly tapestried; and pillared corridors down which hang gorgeous curtains of multi-coloured lime.

There are galleries with organ pipes so realistic in the uncertain light that momentarily you expect strains of music to burst from them.

One exquisite boudoir has a ceiling the blue stalactite of which is spangled with crystals that twinkle like little stars.

Then there is an eerie grotto with sparkling cascades that never move and never sound, but silently foam in billowy rock.

ENTRANCE TO THE CANGO CAVES.

Altars there are, too, like those for ancient sacrifice; and mounds of disturbed mosaics.

On these latter the more fanciful, not to say feminine members of the party discerned broken goblets and scattered trinkets, and shrinkingly thought they saw even half-human forms that loomed in the dimness as though, in the midst of high revels, roysterers of some past age had tried to escape from the vaults hurriedly and in confusion, but overtaken by some mighty wrath, had, like Lot's wife, been stilled for ever, and rendered into stone to endure as a warning through the ages.

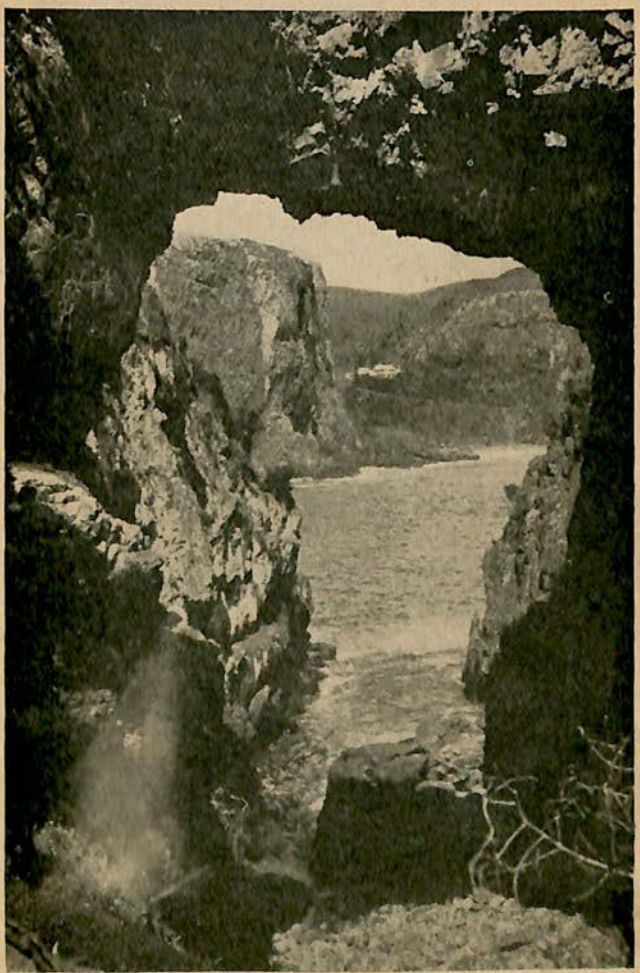
This interpretation intrigued the more prosaic of the party. Hitherto their bent had been geological rather than poetical. But now they were urgent in a demand for more magnesium wire, and were with difficulty restrained by the guide from, in a burst of reckless enthusiasm, heaping the whole of the wire in one last flare of generous illumination.

From this we were happily saved. It was as well, for half the charm of those caves lies in illusion. To have destroyed that by too much light would have been vandalism. As it was, the artificial light was strong enough to give an impression of matchless splendour, yet dim enough to give the imagination scope, which is as it should be, for in the caves all the charm depends on the chance of light and perspective. None of the chambers is really of large size, but an illusion of size is created by the shadows, and from this other illusions spring. Throughout the caves the

SCHOEMAN'S VALLEY: A FERTILE STRETCH IN THE OUDTSHOORN DISTRICT.

effect depends on just how much illumination is permitted; and whoever enters should therefore enter, like Aladdin, a slave to the lamp, and should be guided by that black magician, the genii of strange fancies.

In that mood nothing is too strange for acceptance, and enjoyment is complete. One is then back in a concrete fairy tale, in what the Oudtshoorn people affirm are the finest stalactite caves extant.



A COVE ON THE SHORE AT KNYSNA.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OVER THE OUTENIQUAS.

"A country without sunshine requires all its riches."

BETWEEN Oudtshoorn and George the railway passes over the Outeniqua Mountains. It is the great mountain railway of South Africa—a section of line notable for the difficulties overcome in its construction and for remarkable surroundings. Over it the journey is as full of discovery and interest for the traveller as when, crossing the Zambesi River by rail, he first sees the Victoria Falls through the carriage window.

It was late autumn when we crossed the mountains, but for those accustomed to harsher climates an autumn of which each day was a summer day. As always at Oudtshoorn, the sun shone extravagantly. It flooded the mist-capped Outeniquas till they glowed with warmth and colour. Companionably it climbed the slopes with us, and from then until we sailed was in daily attendance—a friendly, generous sun, of which the traveller carries away memories not easily dislodged.

On the Oudtshoorn side, the Outeniquas are sterile. On the George side, which drops right down to the sea and drains most of the clouds before they pass the summit, the change is radical, even startling. Suddenly the sterile gives place to the fruitful. You are in a land not of greater fertility than the Karoo, but of greater rainfall, and therefore of abundant verdure. Knysna especially is heavily forested, and in the so-called

" Wilderness," here and there a lake flashes and a stream meanders to the sea.

Great combers foam along the edge of the crescent bay, the plains are dotted with pines and oaks, mile upon mile of lush grass and husbandry extends into the viewless distance.

From the high elevation on the mountain side, the prospect of sea and forest and plain, is an inspiring one. Nature has designed that landscape on a noble scale. The plains are vast, the sea comes in with a thousand-mile roll, and on both land and water there is an abundant harvest.

On the edge, with their feet almost in the surf, the mountains stand, lording it over all. We looked for hotels or other signs of habitation on the mountains as the train sped down, but there was none. Yet nowhere shall you find more habitable hills. They are the Adirondacks of the Cape, or will become so when someone with sufficient vision to appreciate and make use of Nature's great gift erects the necessary hotels and summer bungalows there.

To reach all this the train wound laboriously round deep ravines and sharp mountain spurs. In an hour or two the summit was reached. We were on the edge of the Karoo, aloft the mountain ridge which cuts the desert from the sea. It was the parting of the ways, and there we took our last farewell of the Karoo—the unconventional, downright Karoo which sweats superfluous tissue from limbs and cant from minds; the Karoo which, when you leave it, sends something small and still,

and very insistent, to creep like regret to your heart.

Soon the train was pounding down the Montagu Pass, on the George side of the mountain, into a smiling land, one of earth's most verdant spots. We were quickly conscious of the change. Every pore opened to the ozone from below, a dryness crept out of one's bones, and ennui fled as we descended into scenery that became more and more grand.

As it happened, a downpour set in—soft, noiseless rain that lasted half an hour, then passed as gently as it had come. Sunshine followed, and the effect on the mountain was superb. The turf was quickly sodden, runnels glided between the dripping banks on which beads of dew lit to the sun, and rainbows trembled in unexpected quarters. The waterfalls caught the illumination. The foam-flecked burns lay inky black in pools round which the wild olive sent its roots, and the moors were bright with reddening bracken and heather.

And in and out of the winsome scene, sometimes just visible through the blue haze of a ravine, sometimes white just beside us, the wagon road twined with a suggestive air of romance like some old and long-forgotten Roman road lost among mountain passes.

The plain was no less pleasing than the mountain. As the view from above had suggested would happen, time passed all too quickly at George, Knysna, and Mossel Bay.

The town of George is thirty-two miles east of Mossel Bay, and Knysna is fifty-three miles east

A SECTION OF THE MONTAGU PASS BETWEEN OUDTSHOORN AND GEORGE.

of George. Between them they share the honours of the district.

It is a classical-looking littoral, in many ways reminding one of parts of Greece. The sunlit sea, on a bright autumn day, is so blue that you almost expect it to stain the white sands it washes. Across the plain the forests stand, and westward to the sunset a mighty shadow-show of gold and purple plays where the Outeniqua Mountains rear their serrated peaks. Nearer Mossel Bay the coves are rocky, the cliffs lofty above crashing combers. Indeed, the cliff scenery there is such as will be found in few other places along the South African coast. The landscapes around Simon's Bay and Camp's Bay are nobler, and around Durban Bay more vividly beautiful. But from Cape St. Blaize to the Gamtoos the coast has a grandeur of its own. There is, it seemed to us, something vaster, more vital and appealing about the sea there than almost anywhere else in the Cape. And the quaint rock formations, Scylla-like, entice.

Perhaps we had most joy from the rocky swimming-pool at Mossel Bay. There are many swimming-baths in South Africa, but that at Mossel Bay is the only natural one we saw. The waves, except at low tide, foam in and out freely. Thus there is for the swimmer all the delights of the open sea with none of the risk. What this means will be appreciated when it is recalled that while along the South African coast there are plenty of attractive facilities for safe surf-bathing, the currents are generally too uncertain beyond

THE NATURAL SWIMMING POOL AT MOSSEL BAY.

the surf, and the sharks too plentiful, for a swimmer to venture out with safety. Such is the natural formation of the rock-circled pool at Mossel Bay that the sharks are kept out while the water enters freely—water as fresh, sparkling, and full of vitality as the outer sea, and spacious enough for swimming and diving. Eyes brighten, minds clear, the heart grows buoyant as the sparkling salt waters of that pool bite on naked limbs. It is a great restorer.

Mossel Bay is also noted for its oyster beds and line fishing. The waters swarm with fish, some weighing up to seventy pounds, and good sport is to be had.

The climate is excellent, with an air stimulating as wine; and in the season the scene is one of much vivacity, holiday-makers recruiting in large numbers along the whole of that beach, but especially at Mossel Bay, where there are good places of accommodation and the conveniences of a well-managed town.

Inshore, George is a quaint sunny Eden, full of rural charm and sleepy loveliness. Ancient oaks throw their shade across the roads; little white houses peep between the stems; there is the drone of bees upon the air and the tinkle of running water beside the kerb.

Secluded among the many plantations of the Forest Department, George is a very fruitful and charming old place, whose gardens snare you with perfume, so that with rural philosophy, you allot another spell to leisurely wandering among forest

A SECLUDED RETREAT NEAR THE WILDERNESS.

walks and nearby inland canyons along " the cool sequestered vale of life."

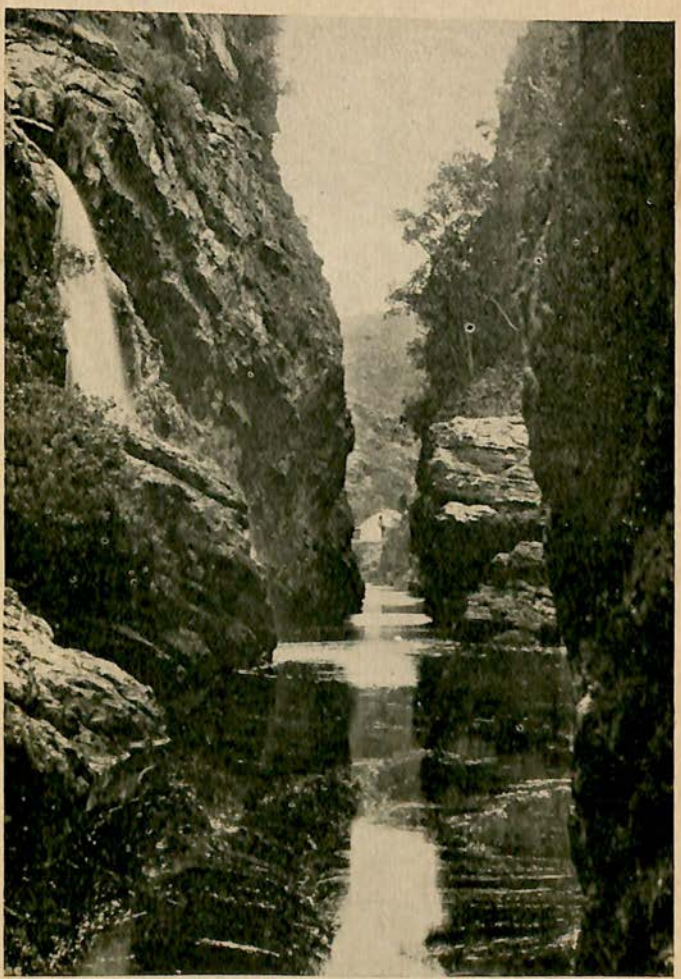
The roads from George are well kept. They are proper motor roads, with a bridge over nearly every stream. They radiate into enticing surroundings.

The Wilderness, with its lakes and occasional seascapes, its fine forest scenery—especially near Kaaimans River—and the delicate fish with which the visitor is regaled, to say nothing of a little rough shooting in the season—grey-buck, pheasants, and duck on the lakes and rivers—has also its earnest votaries.

Then there is the trip to Balmoral and Knysna. The long road from George runs roughly parallel with the curve of the bay. It turns gradually from the Outeniquas; the dark line of mountains recedes farther and farther, until it is faint with distance and inland haze. And soon the view is restricted by intervening hills, and valleys and woods.

South Africa is on the whole sparsely wooded, but this portion of it is nearly all forest. It is not the impressive forest of Canada or the United States. None of the plantations is of considerable age, and the indigenous forest is so dense, so interlaced with wild vine and other undergrowth, and as a rule so dwarfed by the magnitude of the slope on which it grows, that the traveller hardly realises the noble proportions of the trees, unless he penetrates on foot to the wild chestnuts and the great yellow-woods.

Yet there is considerable industry in those



A CREEK ON THE KAAIMAN'S RIVER NEAR GEORGE.

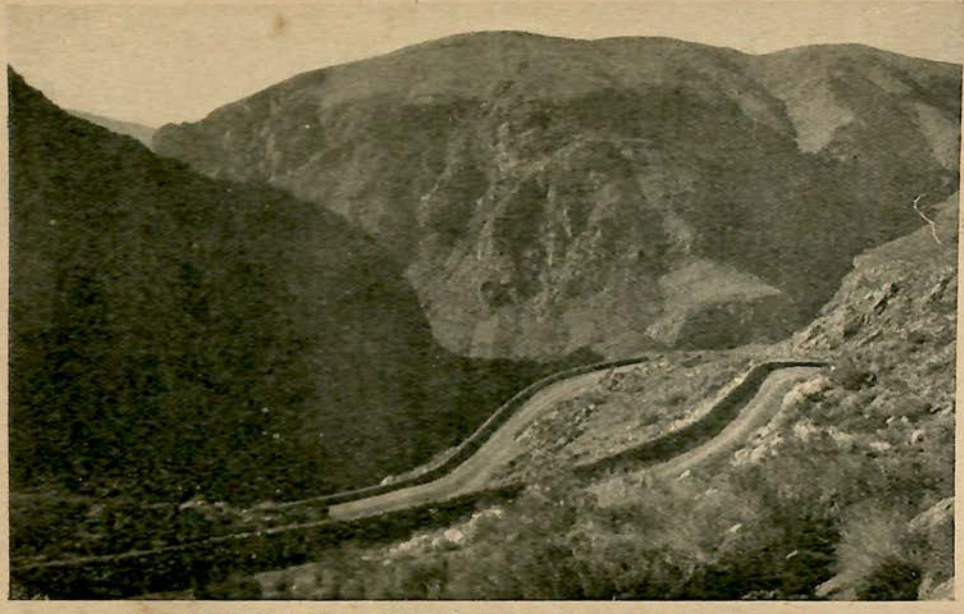
forests, as near Deepwells, where the ringing axe of the wood-cutter is heard, the charcoal-burner tends his oven, and the slipways from the forest to the sawmill are busy with large timber.

The road in places penetrates the forest, as near Balmoral, and mostly it runs through valleys filled with wild beauty, as at Homtini Gorge, whose slopes are densely wooded.

The hills become greener, the streams more numerous and livelier, the whisper and the fragrance of the forests deepen. In parts of those surroundings the placer miner once sought gold, on the whole with indifferent success. Millwood, now almost deserted, was the centre of that enterprise.

It is alluringly situated, commanding views over hill and forest, with occasional glimpses of sea as far as distant Mossel Bay. The glorious climate, the forest setting, the rushing mountain stream, recalled with peculiar charm the similar scenes described by Bret Harte in his Californian tales of the old mining days. The minstrelsy of the birds, the peace, the fragrance, the salinity of the place, were a mental and spiritual bath. One is cleansed of all unworthy feeling, except perhaps of envy—envy of the life, even if it were unprosperous, that those departed diggers had led around Millwood.

The interest of the district culminates at Knysna. The town is small and unimpressive, but its immediate surroundings surprised us. Lofty headlands between which the tide enters narrowly, shut Knysna from the sea. And behind the head-



THE ZWARTBERG PASS BETWEEN OUDTSHOORN AND PRINCE ALBERT.

lands is a spacious lagoon, in which sea and river mingle their waters.

That lagoon is a thing of placid beauty, picturesquely locked among hills, with one or two enchanting islands that heightened, we thought, the resemblance to an Alpine lake. Indeed, seen under a full moon, as we first saw the lagoon, with a silvery path across the water and the dark shadows of the islands and surrounding hills reflected by the still surface, it might have been Como on a small scale.

Even by daylight, it seemed to us, there was the same grace and diversity of outline—an Italian warmth of colouring, and subtle fusion of hillside and lake; lacking, indeed, the splendid villas, but otherwise such a lake as Como was when its young charms were sung by Virgil, that great publicity agent.

WASHED BY TWO OCEANS—THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BACK TO THE CAPE.

Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood.

FROM Mossel Bay our way led to Worcester, and we were again among the oldest settlements of South Africa, villages and towns that date back to the early eighteenth century.

Much of that country-side is moorland, shut in here and there by sterile-looking mountains. But a little way off the beaten track, the moors are aflame with colour, the seemingly bleak mountain slopes are fragrant with the scent of buchu and wild tea. Nowhere, in the season, is there a more generous display of wild flowers than around Riversdale and Swellendam. And at Nuy and Robertson, where water is led in canals for miles to the fields, the land is very productive. One is reminded of parts of France. It is a sunny country-side, carefully cultivated. Many quaint old villages are passed on the way, their ancient church spires picturesquely silhouetted against the mountain background; and over all is an air of peace and of rural felicity.

But perhaps the main attraction of the area is Montagu, the watering-place in the hills—famous even in the days of the East India Company, when Anglo-Indians held it in some esteem for their gout and their livers. South Africa is moderately rich in medicinal springs. In time they will, no doubt, attract greater attention. The accommodation around the curative waters of South Africa is

MONTAGU: A FAVOURITE HOT SPRING RESORT OF THE CAPE.

nowhere so luxurious as will be found at any European spa of note. But the South African waters can be used under almost ideal climatic conditions at those seasons when most European spas are rendered comfortless by the severity of the European winter. The South African waters can be enjoyed in sunshine and comfort all the year round.

Though not so highly impregnated with radium emanations as the waters at Gastien, the hot springs at Montagu are more strongly impregnated than those at Karlsbad or Baden-Baden, and are peculiarly effective for curing rheumatism and diseases of the nervous system. The sanatorium at the baths, though small and plain, is comfortable and well managed.

At Worcester the traveller reaches a point from which many pleasant excursions may be planned. There is the road through the grandeur of Michell's Pass to Tulbagh and Ceres. On the other side there are Wellington, Paarl, and Stellenbosch, then Groot Drakenstein, Fransch Hoek, and The Strand, all connected by good motor roads and containing many memorials of the Huguenots and early Dutch settlers.

It is a land of valleys rimmed by blue mountains. To the casual glance, on a distant view, they are bleak-looking valleys. But on closer examination the mountain slopes are seen to be covered in places with fir plantations. On the arable land below are great blocks of orchards—pear, plum, peach, and prune—with here and there long

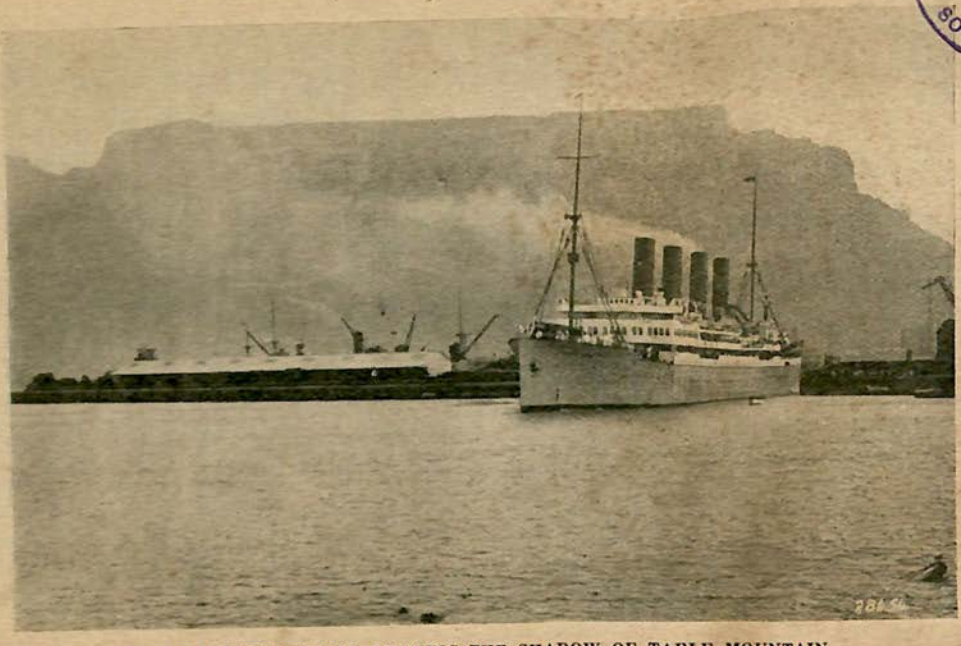
A SECTION OF 100-MILE CAPE MARINE DRIVE.

stretches of vines, here and there a wheatfield or rich pasture.

Then one comes to the great gums and oaks of a bygone age, and dozing in the golden haze are the white-gabled spacious homesteads. They, too, are of a past age. Some have been modernised by electric light and telephones; most of them are dignified, beautiful homes, yet quaintly old-fashioned with their curlycue chimneys, many-paned windows, high stoeps, pergolas, and rambling gardens aglow with coreopsis, asters, and zinnias.

The great peach crop had been cleared, the grapes harvested and pressed, when we passed, but in the air there still lingered a heavy odour of fruit, the countryside being busy with its drying of prunes. We stayed only long enough to rest awhile on the high cool stoeps, and to drink a little of the good white wine of the Cape.

That season the harvest had been an abundant one, prices for produce stood high, there was contentment in every valley. The shadowy gorges of purple and blue, the flushing crimson peaks, the freshness of the morning, the clean earth-smells and heartening signs of industry well rewarded, induced optimism. And as we sped on towards Capetown, in top gear even over the mountain roads, we were a little predisposed, perhaps, to idealise the place, the people, and the lives they lead. South Africa, on the whole, was prosperous, and the Cape, it seemed to us, was a land of plenty; it was again the idyllic oasis between the East and the West.



A UNION-CASTLE LINER LEAVING THE SHADOW OF TABLE MOUNTAIN.

THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF THE
ATIC SOCIETY.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE END OF THE TOUR.

'Tis hard to venture where our betters fail,
Or lend fresh interest to a twice-told tale.
—BYRON.

BOOKS about South Africa are plentiful. Many are good, but *the* book has still to be written. South Africa must be seen to be appreciated. Adequately to describe so large and variedly interesting a country is impossible. To depict only its main features would require, though a miniature scale be planned, a very large canvas, and a very great artist. The description doing justice to South Africa therefore remains unwritten.

Still, in so large an enterprise as those enter upon who take South Africa for their theme, no pen, however mediocre, can altogether fail to hit upon occasional points of interest. And if this volume helps to give even a faint idea, to people unacquainted with South Africa, of its attractions, a sufficient purpose will have been served.

If we can convey to others at least a fraction of what we enjoyed on our tour, we shall be content as having repaid a little of our debt to South Africa for several months of pleasant travel.

During those months a sunniness characteristic of that country entered our hearts and refreshed our beings. New scenes, values, and ideas were encountered plentifully. And with us will long remain the impressive memory of great and peaceful plains; of mountain grandeur, fruitful valleys,

many pleasant towns, and an active people turning a great country to a good account.

It was, therefore, with more than the usual regret at parting that we took leave of Capetown. Slowly the liner passed Sea Point, sailing into the sunset. As the shore receded, a hush descended upon the passengers lining the deck; and most of all it descended upon us, as we realised that South Africa had become a memory and that at last we were at sea. Slowly the African sunset died out of the sky, and the mountainous coast sank behind the horizon. It was the end of the tour.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN STEAMSHIP AND TRAIN SERVICES.

COMFORT and convenience are the characteristics of the South African Railways. The saloons, and especially the dining and sleeping arrangements, are of most modern design. Indeed, railway travel in South Africa will bear comparison with that of much more populous countries.

The steamers, especially the mail boats, plying between Britain and South Africa are luxuriously appointed, and the voyage, which fifty years ago was an ordeal of many weeks, is now a comparatively smooth-water passage occupying only seventeen days. It is a voyage both restful and invigorating; the time may be passed lazily with

a book from the ship's well-stocked library, or deck sports of various kinds may be indulged in according to taste.

Here is a typical dinner menu *en route*:

DINNER.

Hors d'Œuvre.
Consommé Chiffonade.
Crème Palestine.
Boiled Turbot, Oyster Sauce.
Côtelettes de Veau St. Clair.
Roast Saddle of Mutton, Red Currant Jelly.
Potatoes, Château and Boiled.
Vegetable Marrow.
Roast Duckling and Savoury Sauce.
Salad.

Bombe Glacé Impériale.
Crème Rubané.

Paillettes au Parmesan.
Dessert. Coffee.

In the evenings there are concerts and dances, and the ship's orchestra also enlivens the proceedings. Travel to, and in, South Africa is no longer a hardship, it has become a pleasure.

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